THE RAIN GIRL

THE TRAGIC STORY OF

Jeanne Eagels

EDWARD DOHERTY

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Jeanne Eagels as Sadie Thompson *in* RAIN

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EDWARD DOHERTY

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FIRST EDITION

To Mildred

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GOD *gave thee beauty, passion, fire,*
Made thee a flame of heart's desire;
Set thee where high the circle swings—
—And fitted thee with broken wings.
Ah, art too strong and form too frail,
What did thy priceless gifts avail?
The silver cord too tightly strung
Snapt ere the first refrain was sung.

HOW *oft thy grave will hear in vain*
The soft insistence of the rain!
What letters of despair and hope
Death sealed within this envelope!
So, when he rings more curtains down
And other hands let slip the crown,
What ghosts will haunt thy tomb to share
The unborn triumphs buried there!

—HARRY BOWLING.

Los Angeles Times.

"AND *if I laugh at any mortal thing,*
'Tis that I may not weep."

—BYRON.

THE RAIN GIRL

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I

A WEEK or two before the end, Jeanne Eagels put aside the book she had been reading, and—looking out at river and mountains and trees—took up the unwritten book of her life, and read what was, and what was yet to be.

She saw herself—as one does in a dream—as a girl playing with a doll, as a cash girl in a department store, as a child actress, as a chorus girl, as a leading lady in a tent show, as a one-night stand trouper who knew most every dollar a day hotel in the country, as a star on Broadway, as a rebel banned from the stage by the Actors' Equity Association, as a star in the talking picture studios, as a tired and middle-aged and pain-racked woman, hated and hating.

She saw again the men she had loved, the men who had loved her—Morris Dubinsky, Thomas Chadbourne, Ted Coy, Whitney Warren Jr., Barry O'Neill, and a score of others. Love? Figures in a dream.

And she saw herself going back again to Broadway. Jeanne Eagels in a great new play. Jeanne Eagels, the amazement of New York. Jeanne Eagels recognized by all the world as the greatest actress in the world. She was ill. She was worn out. Her quick mind had become slow. At times it frightened her, lied to her. At times it failed her a little. If she did

go back—if she did get a play to suit her—would she not be a dismal failure? Might she not die before rehearsals were half over? Wouldn't she have to fight everyone in the theatre to get her own way—only to go down in helplessness and tears, to the laughing scorn of all her enemies?

But her will was alive, her will that made her laugh and sing and dance when pain and sickness tortured her. Her will was alive and unimpaired, and dominant as ever. And presently she reached out and found a pencil and an envelope and wrote:

"When I am dead from dying then I shall cease to be. But while I am still living I shall never be dead."

She would go back. She would triumph over everything. And Equity—there was a laugh—Equity would have to acknowledge her its most defiant, and its most illustrious member.

Only a week or so ago that was. To-night she lies in an ornate funeral room in Broadway—not the Broadway of the million lights, not the Broadway of her ambitions and her triumphs and her bitterest memories—but the less known Broadway of "uptown."

She is shut in a bronze and silver casket. She is dressed in a peach colored evening gown of velvet, a dress she bought a day or two ago. She is dead from dying—and dead from living too.

Her restless hands are quiet on her breast. Her musical voice, the finest voice on the stage or the talking

picture screen, is hushed. Her dancing feet are still. Only her hair is alive, sunny fine hair, so fine it never could hold combs or pins, so bright it looks like a halo in the flickering light of the candles.

There is a smile on her face. She looks like a girl of seventeen. She looks like one who never had had to fight her way through life, like one who never had encountered pain, nor defeat, nor self-pity, nor heartbreak, nor ostracism, nor despair. For the first time in more than thirty years she feels no pain.

The room is wide and long and high, and the light is dim; and there are so few present it seems bare and cold. She may have been what she claimed, "the greatest actress in the world," but she has lost all power to draw a crowd on Broadway.

Rudolph Valentino lay in this house of death some years ago, surrounded by flowers and by friends, awaiting the chanting of priests, and the funeral train, and the grave in Hollywood. And Valentino, dead, was still the greatest name on the street.

Thousands and thousands of people stood outside Campbell's waiting their turn to pass before the bier. It was a cold unseasonable day. It rained all day. And all day, and far into the night, great crowds stood in line, or wherever else they could, and pushed and surged and fought to get in. Men with night sticks bellowed orders to them, shoved them back, threatened them. Men on horses rode through them. They were not frightened nor deterred. They carried a mounted

man with them through a plate glass window. They knocked down men and women and children, and stepped over their bodies into the funeral parlor, that they might say a last farewell to "the Sheik."

Nobody breaks windows to see Jeanne Eagels. There are no pushing crowds, no mounted police, no women fainting or screaming, no children trampled. There are but a few close friends, a few curiosity seekers; a few who come that their names may appear in tomorrow morning's papers.

"Gin" Eagels, Broadway called her—the unruly, the turbulent, the drinker, "the hop-head," the outcast of Equity, the actress no man could completely manage, the woman who loved many men—and none—the tough little Kansas City chorus girl who fought her way up to the stars without help from anyone, and who ruined herself with arrogance, and with liquor, and with drugs.

There are but a few who knew and understood her—and she was content with that. And to these few she was not only the greatest actress, but also the most courageous spirit, and the finest woman. Only to these few did she reveal herself as she really was.

Jeanne Eagels took some of her philosophy from Byron's lines—

> "And if I laugh at any mortal thing,
> 'Tis that I may not weep."

She was explosive, mercurial, neurotic, sweet as an

angel one moment, berserk as a fiend the next, contrite and ashamed when anger cooled, but timid of making amends—timid for fear of insults or reprimands from those she had offended.

She hid her temperament as she hid her pain, with a laugh and a smile. She talked fast. She gestured with her eloquent hands. She danced up to people, humming a song, and she danced away from them. She was always a sham, except with those she loved.

She was always the actress, the poseur, the mimic, the comedienne. Few guessed that she was also the earnest student, the thinking mind, the driving ambition, the slave of drama, the lonesome, sick, tormented woman.

Perhaps she wasn't the greatest actress in the world. Who can say? But certainly she was a fascinating and extraordinary soul, as many-faceted as a diamond.

As the hoofer says in "Broadway," she was "the artiste first, and the human being second."

She was devoted to her mother, and to her family.

She made millions of dollars, and spent them or gave them away. She died "broke," but her mother will never want for anything. Her estate was involved, but there was much insurance. Many women have known as dire poverty as she. Few have known such luxury. Fewer still have been so poor, and have cared so little for luxury when it came. She never hoarded money. She despised those who did. She never bothered about the bills. She spent days eluding her creditors and

their summons servers. Yet she paid the rent for many a needy friend.

"If I have thirty cents when I die," she once declared, "it is thirty cents too much."

She had courage to meet defeat and conquer it; but she could not overcome success.

She never made a speech. She never would be honored with a banquet. She hated parties, but always went to them. If she weren't invited she was angry. And if she weren't the life of the party she went home angry. She was fond of asking guests to her home; but frequently she would chase them out.

She had many lovers, but no great loves. There was no passion in her. There was a spirituelle, an unphysical quality, in the love she felt for any man.

There was something of the wood dryad in her, something of Puck, something consistently inconsistent.

She drank, but neither to be sociable nor for the sake of drink. Sometimes she drank until she fell to the floor. Sometimes she went for months without taking a drop. She took drugs; but they were administered by a physician to dull her pain, or to wake her from a dangerous lethargy.

She was lonely all her life, and hungry for friends. But she could not afford them. She made herself hate people, and made people hate her—for self-protection.

"You make me sick," she told a friend. "You're a Newfoundland puppy—up on everybody's lap. You want people to like you. Why? It's fatal. When they

like you, they think they have the right to tell you how to say your lines, how to dress, how to fix your hair. 'Dearie, I think you're marvelous, but, as your best friend I must say, for your own good, that you are a trifle fumble-footed, and your hair is flat, and your make-up is atrocious, and you stutter badly. Let me show you how you ought to play that scene.'

"If you hate people they will let you alone, give you your own way. And you must have your own way, or you are only one of the mob. You can't imitate anybody, and be anybody.

"Hate makes the world go round, not love. You hate poverty, and overcome it. You hate ignorance and stupidity, and rise above it. You hate people, and stay yourself. You are original. You stand out."

She ignored the other members of her troupes—except the humblest. These looked up to her, and did not presume to criticize or advise. She hated most directors, most managers, most producers.

She hated lies and liars, and though it may be said that most of her life she lived a lie—yet it was seldom that she told a lie.

"Yes, I was late. What of it? Yes, I was drunk last night. What of it?"

She lived a lie? All people of the theatre live lies, for they dramatize themselves on and off the stage. Their imagination makes them, to themselves, different from all other people. They do not live, really, they dream.

"Never deny, never explain," was Jeanne's motto. "Never rush into print. Let them think anything they like, say anything they like. Say nothing—and become a legend."

And she was the stuff of legends.

She hated interviews, yet she encouraged stories about her "fits of temperament." She believed that good publicity. When she did grant an interview to a newspaperman it was because she had something to say.

"To what do you attribute your success on the stage?" asked Samuel Hoffenstein, writing in the *New York Times* of May 29, 1927.

"To my ability to act, and the astuteness of managers in noticing it," she replied. "Superb actors do not grow on every bush, if I may quote Homer."

"Do you enjoy acting?"

"Nobody enjoys anything all the time. Sometimes I like it absolutely, sometimes I like it relatively. That is to say, there are times I dislike it less than anything else I can think of. Sometimes—usually, perhaps—I have no feeling about it whatever. I do not find acting difficult. If I did, I should find something easier to do, and do it much better. Those who find any difficulty should quit it at once if they can. They will never do it well."

Death came to her suddenly. She died in a doctor's office, among strangers. One physician said she died of "alcoholism." The surgeon who performed the autopsy denied this. She died of an overdose of chloral

hydrate, he said. Jeanne's closest friends declare the drug was the usual dose, but that her heart had been weakened to the point where the dose was fatal.

She died about the time she was usually most aglow with life, just before the hour set for the curtain to rise.

The curtain has gone up now in every theatre in New York. The musicians in the pit have played the music cue, and audiences have settled down to await the beginning of the play.

In the theatre across the street from Campbell's, a packed house is watching Jeanne Eagels in her last picture, "Jealousy"—with the peacock feathers and the guttering candles decorating its "title page."

Jeanne lies dead in her bronze and silver coffin. Yet she walks and talks, laughs, loves, knows jealousy and anger and despair, stirs emotions in women and in men.

"Isn't she wonderful?" women ask. "Isn't she lovely? It isn't possible she is dead." And girls look at each other, stage-struck girls, and say, "What wouldn't I give to be like her! If I only had her chances!"

Jeanne hated the movies and the movie people. Yet if she achieve immortality, it must be through the moving picture screen.

The curtains fall. The orchestras put away their instruments and crawl through the little doors in the pits. The lights die out in theatre marquees. Actors and actresses rub the grease paint from their faces, smoke, laugh, sing, dress, and hurry away.

But few hurry to the bier of Jeanne Eagels.

Helen Eagels is there, Jeanne's younger sister, and Sam Harris, the producer. He was in Boston, attending the funeral of his father-in-law, when he heard that Jeanne was dead. He left at once, to do whatever he could. Clifton and Mabel Webb arrive, and Libby Holman, and Monta Bell, and Mme. Frances who used to supply Jeanne with gowns, and Kitty Sullivan who used to dress her hair, and Maria and Nelly Savage, and G. B. Outhwaite, and Jimmy Auditore, and a few more. Francine Larrimore comes with Barry O'Neill, the last of all Jeanne's lovers, now Miss Larrimore's leading man in "Let Us Be Gay!"

Larrimore and Eagels had not been friends, for Eagels had walked out of the principal rôle in the play "Chicago" in fury and disgust; and Francine had walked into it.

Francine looks on the dead face, the sunny hair, the high smooth forehead, the high cheek bones, the soft cheeks, the saucy uptilted nose, the wide mouth, the firm chin, the eyes that are closed—eyes that changed with her moods, eyes that were black, or yellow, or gray, or green, or blue as the skies.

She stares, expressionless, not moving. The little group of Jeanne's friends watch, wondering. What does Larrimore see? What does she remember? Suddenly they see tears fall from Larrimore's face to Eagels'. It is one of the greatest tributes Jeanne Eagels ever won.

II

Jeanne Eagels knew, weeks before, that she had not long to live. She had a presentiment—more than that—an omen.

She knew it when the bird flew in through the window of her apartment in Park Avenue.

Christina Larson, her secretary companion, had thrown up the window that Jeanne might have some air, might feast her eyes on the skyscrapers, the apartment hotels, the minarets and towers jutting into the sky, the pigmy automobiles and people on the street.

And while Jeanne stood at the window, the bird flew in and flapped its golden wings against her golden hair.

"'Stina!" Jeanne cried. "'Stina, I'm going to die!"

'Stina laughed, but she too knew of the superstition concerning birds that fly in through open windows, or beat their wings against a pane.

"But this is a golden bird," she said. "That doesn't mean death. It means fortune. Good luck! Love! Gold! Something nice!"

She took the bird into her hands and stroked its feathers.

"No." Jeanne backed away. "It means death."

'Stina let the bird lie in the palm of her hand; then, with a quick gesture, tossed it into the night.

"And love flies out the window," Jeanne said. "And life flies with it. Love and life. What does it matter?"

"No, Miss Eagels. I simply put a bird out of the window. A gold bird. Not a blue bird."

"It's all right," Jeanne answered. "Birds mean death, 'Stina. I know I'm doomed. I hope it's a spectacular death. I hope it's on the stage, after the last act."

This was but a few days before she wrote the note on the envelope.

She gave Monta Bell a tiny ivory elephant.

"It will bring you good luck," she said.

The day she died, Bell took it from his desk and put it in his drawer. When he looked for it again, it had vanished.

Julian Eltinge, "the loveliest woman on the stage," rented his home to Marshall Neilan and Blanche Sweet; and, to make room for a cupboard they wanted to place against a wall, he took down eight pictures and put them in a closet.

Months later, when the Neilans had moved out, Eltinge went back to his home, took the pictures from the closet, and brushed the dust from them.

"Queer," he thought. "Seven of these people have died since I left. The only ones of all my friends who were alive when I went away. I'm glad Jeanne Eagels is still living. I must tell her about this. She'll love it."

The next morning, at his ranch in San Diego, he read that Jeanne had died.

The little group in Campbell's undertaking rooms

talk of the golden bird and the ivory elephant, and Jeanne's plans for her new house. "The house is divine, and if I live—I will have trees and flowers—if I live. I will have you all out—if I live."

They talk of her life in the tent shows, "in the circus," in the theatres of little towns, in the theatres of New York. They speak of her wit, her mind that was like a searchlight, probing, stabbing, questioning, of her dancing feet, her fluttering hands, her voice that might have taken her into grand opera, of her loves and her hates and her tricks.

"I was in my dressing room last night," says Barry O'Neill, "ready to go on, when I heard she had died. I had talked to her only that morning, and she said, 'Barry, I love you, really I do.' You know how we quarreled. I loved her, but I couldn't stand much of her. No man could. She was too dynamic, too full of energy.

"I was humming, because I was happy. I thought I would see her after the show. And—and then I heard that she was dead. And while I was trying to understand, I heard my cue. I went singing onto the stage, singing that thing, 'If Love Be All,' you know? I went on singing. And I felt myself breaking. I couldn't stand it. Then I heard a voice saying to me, 'Jeanne wouldn't break. Jeanne would go through with it.'"

The Webbs remember how Jeanne used to visit Clifton's dressing room just before the first act curtain, how

she'd dance into the room, how she'd laugh. They remember too how she loved to watch Clifton and Libby Holman in their "Moanin' Low" number in the "Little Show" and of how fond she was of Libby. "If I'd only known Libby and people like her a long time ago," she used to say, "how different my life might have been."

Kitty and Mabel smooth the soft fine hair. Maria Savage, Jeanne's French teacher whom she called "Mama Froggy" puts an orchid on the peach velvet breast.

'Stina Larson tells how she placed Jeanne's rosary and her picture at the base of a little altar in the Ossining home, and how she let three little girls come in to pray for Jeanne, kneeling in front of the altar.

The altar was a glass-encased mosaic of the Madonna and Child, that Jeanne had kept in her room for years.

Jeanne was born and reared a Catholic, but she seldom went to any church once she made her First Communion. The rosary was one her mother sent her, and which she carried onto the stage every night for five years in the pocket of "Sadie Thompson's" coat.

She misplaced it, on the first night "Rain" played in New York, and held the curtain fifteen minutes until she found it.

Sam Harris, who made Jeanne a star, paces the floor, angry and anguished.

"There lies the greatest actress in the world," he says. "And the greatest comedienne. And where is

the crowd of actresses not good enough to kiss the hem of her skirt? There are people she's been feeding and clothing, who aren't here, who haven't sent flowers, who haven't even sent telegrams of sympathy. Do they hate her? Are they afraid of Equity? Would Equity be offended at their grief?"

He makes a note of people who are not there. Some of them will come to him and beg for parts some day.

Dawn comes. The candles are snuffed. Preparations are made for the funeral services in the chapel, and the train to Kansas City, "that slow little town" she hated—and visited most every summer—the city of her birth.

They are playing Massenet's "Elegy," Jeanne's favorite. She was always playing it, always humming or singing it. She played it badly, and sang it atrociously. The high notes sob, and women sob with them.

"Where are your flowers?" Helen Eagels asks Harris.

"There," he says. White roses. Helen takes one and thrusts it into her sister's bosom.

"She would have wanted it so," she explains.

And now the sound of the "L" trains have drowned out the elegy; and the street cars' clang, clang, clang, is heard, and the honking of automobiles, the whistle of the policeman on the corner, the cry of the newsboy, the rumbling sounds made by the wheels of heavy trucks.

The song of mourning gives way to the jazz note of

New York that has crept into all the songs of Broadway—"Say hello to Forty-second Street"—"A million hearts beat quicker there, a million lights they flicker there"—"Don't blame it all on Broadway."

A girl who has come "out of the sticks" to make a great success on Broadway is going home. And as her coffin is wheeled through the streets to the depot, it will pass a hundred other girls who have come from "out of the sticks" to take her place.

In a few days she will lie in state in a funeral room not far from the little shack where she once lived. People who loved her and reverenced her, and people who never heard of her before, will pass by her bier, thousands of them, without crowding, without haste, without excitement.

Old friends of the Eagels' family will carry the heavy coffin to the grave, eight pall-bearers straining every muscle, staggering, fearing—each one of them—that he will falter any moment.

A priest will talk of the long dusty road that is the life of a man or a woman, and the impossibility of anyone's walking down that road without gathering some dust upon him. And presently Jeanne will sleep on a hill, between her father and her brother, in the shade of pine trees.

Her mother, her two sisters, her two brothers, and her brother-in-law, will remain a little while on their knees, praying for her soul, and looking at the floral piece sent by Barry O'Neill with its message:

"God bless you, Jeanne, I love you."

III

Jeanne Eagels was not born in Boston. She was not born in 1894. She was not of Spanish and Irish blood. Nor was her father either an artist or a gambler. For that matter, her name was not Jeanne Eagels. The family name was spelled Eagles, and she was baptized Amelia Jean. She was born at 30th and McGee Streets, in Kansas City, and the undertaker who buried her is the son of Mrs. Mellody, who bathed and dressed her when she was born. Jeanne was fond of telling new friends that her father's name was Aguilar, that he was a Spaniard, and that he looked exactly like Antonio Moreno.

"The first time my mother saw Antonio Moreno on the screen," she said, "she almost screamed. She thought he was my father's ghost."

Her father was Edward Eagles, the last of a long line of Pennsylvania Dutch farmers. Henry W. Shoemaker, American Minister to Bulgaria, and Chairman of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission, declares that Jeanne's paternal line of descent is easily traced to Domini Egal, a French Huguenot, who, in 1790 resided on a large farm near Maytown, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. This Domini Egal was born in Languedoc about 1720 and fled with his parents to Switzerland to escape persecution. He came to Lan-

caster County with the ancestors of President Hoover and the maternal ancestors of Andrew W. Mellon and Senators Simon Cameron and J. Donald Cameron. The armorial bearings of several Egal families exist in heraldry—so it is little wonder Jeanne sometimes said she was French and pronounced her name "Zhon Egál." Edward Eagles' mother was Emily Haley, born in Kentucky of Irish parents. Edward Eagles was a carpenter.

Jeanne's mother, Julia, was one of the many daughters of Eugene Sullivan who came out of the County Cork to Boston in 1845 when he was nineteen years old. He married his childhood sweetheart, Hanorah O'Neill, of the Munster O'Neills, and "Julie" was born in Boston. The family moved to Leavenworth County, Kansas, when Julie was a child.

Jeanne was the second child born to Edward and Julia Eagles. Edna was the first. Helen followed Jeanne. The boys came later, Leo, and George, and Paul. Jeanne was born on June 26, 1890. She was the idol of Grandpa Sullivan, and the pride of his last years, not only because she was named after him, but because she was such a spitfire, such a cunning child, and such a beauty.

'Gene Sullivan—he didn't care to be called Eugene—was a strong heavy-fisted man. He worked hard all his life, and played hard. His only recreations were writing pieces for Irish-American newspapers and playing with his children and his grandchildren.

"Jennie Eagles" as a girl—before she became Jeanne Eagels

When he went to the post-office to mail his articles to the paper, he would take Jeanne, and her rag doll, " Judy Punch," with him. And he would regale those he met with tales of his granddaughter.

His favorite story concerned the time he gave Edna and Jeanne each a penny. Edna bought candy. But Jeanne bought gum; and when Grandpa asked her why she said, " Because! Gum's savin'er."

He bragged about her generosity, and the wily way she helped Edna without sacrificing any interest of her own. When Edna was given candy or cookies she split with Jeanne. When Jeanne received anything she said, " Edna wants some too."

Grandpa Sullivan died when Jeanne was three years old. But Jeanne never forgot him. She was as proud of the old man as he had been of her; and she would sometimes draw herself up and stand before her mother and say, " I am a Sullivan." Leo, her favorite brother, was sometimes, but not always, admitted to the Sullivan clan. But nobody else in the family except her mother was ever deemed worthy of being a Sullivan. And mother, by the way, was always Julie to Jeanne.

On the morning of Jeanne's funeral in Kansas City, Mrs. Eagles dreamed that her father was in the house, and that he had got up early and put on his best black suit and brushed his best black hat, and shined his shoes until they glistened.

Mrs. Eagles was surprised to see him up so early. He had been one to sleep late in the morning.

"Why are you up and around so early, Pa?" she asked. "And dressed in your best clothes?"

"I'm going to Jeanne's mass," he said.

The dream was so real that even after she awakened, Mrs. Eagles began to get breakfast for her father.

Mrs. Eagles was in Los Angeles with George and Paul, when Jeanne died. Helen was in New York.

The telephone rang, and George went to answer it. It was New York calling.

"It's Jeanne," Mrs. Eagles said. She turned to a visitor, beaming. "Jeanne calls me twice a week," she explained. "I get so I know exactly when to expect a call from her."

"It isn't Jeanne," George announced. "It's Helen."

"Helen? What's happened to Jeanne?"

"Helen says—did you get a telegram, a telegram about Jeanne?"

"No! No! What about Jeanne?"

"What about Jeanne?" George asked Helen. "Dead? I don't believe it. Dead!"

Mrs. Eagles took the phone from him, and Helen must tell her again and again before she would believe.

Jeanne, as a child, was frail, but mischievous. And there wasn't a boy on the block that wasn't afraid of her. She was a tomboy. She liked to climb up onto the roof of a barn. She swung from the limbs of trees. She walked fences, and skipped from rafter to rafter in the attics of houses building in the neighborhood.

She was six or seven when she fell from a fence she

and Edna were walking. She broke her right arm, and ran home to her mother. A doctor was called, but he wasn't the best in the world. He set the arm, but it pained all the rest of her life, especially when it was wet. And it was wet every night and every matinée for five years when Jeanne played in "Rain."

The broken arm went into the legend of Jeanne's life. She put it there.

She was a circus girl when it was broken, she said, riding around the ring on a big white horse.

You were to imagine the crowds, the clowns, the aerialists, the tight-rope walkers, the elephants, the boys selling peanuts, pop-corn, chewing gum and candy, pink lemonade and pop, the ring master, and Jeanne, a mite of a girl in spangles and tights, perched on the back of a milk-white steed. The horse takes fright. It rears. Jeanne is thrown to the sawdust, a pitiful little bundle of spangles, her arm broken.

You are to imagine her next in the dressing room back of the big tent, being very, very brave while the doctor—he was only one of the clowns, but he had studied medicine—put the arm in splints. She grits her teeth to keep from crying, and shuts her eyes, and listens hard to the music of the calliope playing under the big top, and the voices of boys selling "Peanuts, pop-corn, chewing gum, candy, and lemonade," so that she will not think of the pain, so that she may not realize she will never never ride the big white horse again.

Jeanne used to dramatize herself before she ever

heard of drama, and she played the part of "Cinderella" at a church benefit when she was a little over five.

That was the first time Ruby Stapp saw Jeanne, and Ruby was overcome. She had recently moved into the neighborhood, and when she learned that Jeanne lived just across McCoy Alley—now McCoy Avenue—she was elated. Maybe if she went with Jeanne all the time, Jeanne would show her how to be an actress.

Ruby's father owned a grocery store, and the two girls, when they weren't playing with dolls, would play around the candy counter. Sometimes, when both the elder Stapps were out, Ruby and Jeanne would "mind" the store and wait on customers.

Ruby used to get very tired of Jeanne, and of Edna too, and order them home. Edna would go, and would not return for days. But Jeanne would become scornful and defiant. "I won't go," she'd say. "I have as much right here as you have. Try and chase me out." In a minute the children would be friends again, and Jeanne would be mimicking Ruby or Edna, and Ruby would be all admiration once more.

Ruby was more than a playmate and an audience to Jeanne. She was sometimes an inspiration. She had frequent headaches, and Jeanne was glad whenever Ruby complained of this malady, for it gave her a chance to play doctor. She would rub Ruby's head and neck exactly as she had seen a neighborhood charlatan treat a patient. And presently, whether Jeanne's

fingers had anything to do with it or not, the headache would disappear. Years later Ruby went to a moving picture show and saw Jeanne play the part of a healer. She rubbed out a headache just as she had done when she was a child.

Jeanne's greatest thrill came with Ruby's first toothache. The tooth not only hurt, but it was loose; and Jeanne gave her advice as a professional dentist that it should be pulled. Ruby agreed, but not right away. She made the stipulation that Jeanne could be the dentist, but that the patient must first be sound asleep before the tooth was pulled.

Jeanne obtained her mother's permission to stay at Ruby's house overnight, and she and Ruby went to bed early. Jeanne tied a string on the tooth, and Ruby was frightened.

"Remember," she said, "you got to wait until I'm sound asleep."

"Of course."

"Well, how will you know I'm sound asleep?"

"Do you snore?"

"No."

"Well, go to sleep anyway, I'll know—and if you're awake you can stop me."

It was hours before Ruby fell asleep—hours of excitement to Jeanne, leading up to the great third act climax.

A dozen times Jeanne raised herself up on her elbow and tried to find the string. A dozen times Ruby

pushed her away and said, "Not yet. Not yet." Jeanne gave it up.

She went to sleep herself, to wake with a start. It was morning. Ruby was asleep. The string was still about her tooth. Cautiously, quietly, gently, Jeanne took hold of it, not daring to breathe. She got a firm hold on it, and gave it a sudden sharp jerk. The tooth came out.

When she was a great actress Jeanne used to tell her friends how she had lost a tooth when she was a girl. A friend had pulled it out, and she, Jeanne, found the vacant space a great boon.

"I was only a child, of course, but I was an actress even then, playing all over the middle west. I could make up as a witch or a hag, thanks to that missing tooth. I could paint my other teeth black—and there was the ugly gap right in the center. It was quite effective."

Jeanne was not much troubled by puppy love, though she and Ruby both liked a certain boy in the neighborhood. They didn't fight over him. Even then Jeanne didn't think men or boys worth fighting for. They giggled about him, told secrets about him, made plans for bridal ceremonies in which the boy figured as the bridegroom of two pig-tailed girls, and occasionally made him mind their dolls while they played "ladies' card party."

There was a big yellow rose-bush in back of Jeanne's home, and sometimes she and Ruby would hide behind

it and listen to Cousin Kate Callary talking to some of her beaux. This was the best fun of all.

Cousin Kate was a beautiful girl, but consumptive. She left her beaux, one day, kissed her mother, said good-bye to Jeanne and Ruby, and went "out west." She never returned. Her death made such an impression on the family that for many years all the young girls believed they were tubercular, and that they too must go out west.

Edna subsequently did go west, fearing tuberculosis. She got as far as Needles, Arizona; and stayed there because she loved the climate. She met Bill Ackerley, an engineer on the Santa Fe railroad, and when she returned to Kansas City he followed. They were married and returned to Needles. They still live there, the parents of six children. And if there was ever any tubercular condition in Edna's lungs, it has long since disappeared.

Jeanne held the fear of consumption for many years. And she was not alone in the belief that she was a victim of the plague. She looked so thin, so wraith-like, that many advised her to go west. A physician in New York told her she might build up her resistance by drinking a little champagne every day. For a long time that was all Jeanne Eagels drank. And two or three sips would make her dizzy.

Newspaper biographers of Jeanne, and they are many, invariably say that she was seven years old when she made her first appearance on the stage as Puck, in

"A Midsummer Night's Dream." She was actually eleven.

Georgia Brown, mother of Evelyn Vaughn, Bert Lytell's first wife, was the one who cast Jeanne for the part. She had come to Kansas City to open a school of drama. She decided the best way to announce her intention was to give a play, and she advertised for little girls.

Jeanne hurried to Miss Brown with the paper in her hand. And Miss Brown accepted her at once.

Tessie Marshall, who later played with Richard Mansfield, Jeanne Eagels, and Helen Levenson were each given the rôle of Puck, to play on alternate nights. They rehearsed for months before their teacher believed the cast was perfect in their rôles; and the play was staged at the Auditorium.

Miss Levenson and Miss Marshall received the praise of all the critics; but no paper mentioned Jeanne Eagels. Either no reviewer saw her in the part, or else they all thought it more charitable to leave her out of their stories than to mention her.

It was not the last time she was to be slighted. No doubt she was hurt. But she contented herself with the knowledge that she was the greatest actress in the world and that some day the world would recognize that fact.

II

THE playing of "Puck" seemed to mark a definite period in Jeanne's life. It centered all her attention on herself as an actress, crystallized her ambition for a stage career, made everything else but the theatre unimportant and rather dull.

School irked her more than it ever had. She had always been mischievous in school, and frequently her mother or Edna was compelled to come to the classroom to promise the teacher that Jeanne would mend her ways. Jeanne went to St. Joseph's parochial school when her father had money, to the Morris public school when he had none. Jeanne behaved in one as she did in the other.

She had a fondness for dill pickles, and if she couldn't get one from Ruby Stapp's father, she would wheedle a penny from her mother and buy one. And she thought nothing of taking a pickle to school with her.

One day Sister Alma Cecile called her to the desk.

"I smell pickles, Jeanne. Have you one?"

"No, sister."

"What is that unsightly bulge in your stocking?"

"That's a pickle, Sister. It's in my stocking, but I haven't got it, have I?"

Jeanne quit school shortly after making her First Communion.

It was a rainy day, her First Communion day, and Jeanne, in her new white dress and her long veil, looked dismally down the street. The church was only a block away, but she would be wet through before she reached it.

She must make her Communion. But she must not get her dress wet. That dress represented the height of glory. To get it soiled was unthinkable.

Jeanne watched the rain for a little while, and other little girls watched her.

"You're going to get wet," they said, laughing, shouting, making a song of it. They leaned out of windows, getting wet themselves. They stood on the porch with her, tantalizing, wondering what she would do.

Jeanne didn't keep them in suspense. She took off her veil. She took off her pretty dress, and folded it neatly. She stuck veil and dress under her petticoat. And while the other girls shouted that now she'd be arrested, she dashed down the rainy street to church.

Her long brown pigtails beat against her back. Her petticoat and her little white panties were soaking wet, but the dress and the veil were merely damp. She put them on as soon as she had gained the shelter of the church, and marched to the altar rail like a little angel.

Ruby Stapp had gone to the country, but there were other girls to play with, Ruth Malone, Margaret

Knowles, Anna Mall, Thecla Tempelman, and Alma Cohen.

Jeanne loved to go to Anna's house and listen to Anna playing the piano, and she enjoyed the coffee cake Anna's mother made. She'd go to church with Edna and Anna, or Thecla or Ruth, and sometimes she sang in the choir. And she'd go to the matinées with Anna or Thecla or Margaret. Alma worked in the confectionery store outside the theatre.

Jeanne quit school to go to work. A friend got her a job in the stock room of a department store. She earned five dollars a week. On her first pay day she bought a blouse for her mother, a couple of theatre tickets and an account book for her father. She walked home to save carfare. She had ten cents left.

Jeanne always treated money like that—something for her mother, something for her friends, something for herself, something for theatre tickets. She might boggle over an item of five cents in a two-dollar luncheon bill—and she frequently did—but she would tip the waiter fifty cents. She might spend money extravagantly, but she could also haggle over pennies. She never gave a porter more than twenty cents for carrying her bags, no matter how heavy they might be. If he were worth any more, she felt, he wouldn't be a porter. When she bought her own vegetables and meats she would probably buy more than she could use—but neither the butcher nor the grocer would cheat her by half a cent.

Jeanne didn't stay long in the stock room. The work was too dull. She became a cash girl.

When the saleslady takes your money, she shouts, "Cash," and a thin little girl comes running up. She takes the money, the merchandise, and the wrapping paper, and hurries away to some mysterious spot. In a few moments she comes running back with your purchase wrapped and tied, and your change, if any.

Cash girls need something more than good legs, and Jeanne was an indifferent cash girl. Her legs were swift enough—if thin—but her mind was not on her work. She was thinking of Georgia Brown's school, and of the people who played every day in O. D. Woodward's stock company.

Jeanne and Margaret haunted the theatre and Georgia Brown's whenever possible; in the half hour for lunch, after work, Sundays, holidays. It mattered not so much if they were closed, dark. It was something, merely to be in the vicinity of these temples—and to wish.

It isn't known whether Jeanne quit the department store, or was fired. She vanished anyway, and bobbed up in the office of Al Mackensen, a nice old man who claimed relationship to Field Marshal von Mackensen of the Imperial German army.

Mackensen had a casting office. He placed men and women in vaudeville, or burlesque, or tent, or repertoire shows, and sometimes in musical comedy companies on tour.

Jeanne felt like a stray cat that had wandered into a creamery. It was a thrill to meet actors and actresses, and to take a part, however small, in getting them work on the stage.

It was Mackensen who sent her to the Dubinsky Brothers, and so launched her on her career.

Before this eventful day Jeanne had had "plenty of experience." She took part in every play that Georgia Brown produced—"In the Palace of the King"—"Ben Hur"—"The Holy City"—and others; and she had at times played little bits in the O. D. Woodward stock company.

Eva Lang was the leading lady of this company and Jeanne adored her. It was not the usual adoration of a girl for a beautiful, gifted woman. It was the admiration of a child for a living goddess. She knew and imitated every gesture in Eva's acting, every intonation of her voice, every movement of her body.

There were matinées every Sunday, and Jeanne and her friends never failed to attend. Jeanne would sit silently all through the play, absorbed, her big eyes shining; her ears remembering every phrase. Thecla couldn't bear to talk to her at these times. It was almost frightening to look at her, she was so spellbound. Thecla frequently found more drama in Jeanne than in the play she watched.

After the play they would go to Jeanne's home, or Thecla's, or Margaret's, or Anna's; and there Jeanne would reënact the play, giving not only Eva Lang's

rôle, with Eva's gestures and Eva's voice and Eva's walk, but all the other impersonations as well.

Jeanne's closeness to Eva Lang, when she became a member of the stock company, did not cool her ardor. When Eva gave her a red rose she held it in her hands until it fell apart, even taking it to bed with her and scratching herself with the thorns. As a great favor to Margaret, she allowed her to smell it—but not to touch it.

Georgia Brown's school was upstairs of the theatre, and Jeanne was distracted between theatre and school. She would sit on the iron stairs just outside the school door, waiting for her cues on the stage, and listen to Georgia instructing her pupils.

When the cue came—shouted up by an obliging stage hand—Jeanne would come out of her study, and scamper down the long flight of stairs, to arrive breathlessly in the wings—perhaps only to catch up a spear and strut on the stage as one of the mob—perhaps to speak a line or two. "The marster is not at 'ome. I wonder where 'e be. Ah, 'ere he comes now."

On her exit she would climb the stairs again, and rest outside the door. Miss Brown didn't like the necessity of keeping the door open, but Jeanne pleaded with her and had her way.

"If you close the door, Miss Brown, I'll have to stay inside, and I won't hear my cues. Or else I'll have to stay outside, and I won't learn anything."

She was too poor to pay Georgia Brown for lessons.

She was too poor to go to a high school or college even if she had wanted to. Yet she gained as fine an education as most people do. Everything she did helped to educate her. Her observations of Eva Lang, the bits of lessons she overheard in Georgia Brown's school, the books she read, became part of her.

"Hold your mouth like a doughnut," she would hear Georgia saying to her pupils, "not like a safety pin. Round your words. Don't blur them. Say 'The poor girl with the world before her.' Now say it without that terrible middle-west burr. 'The poo-ah guh-ll with the wu-uld befo-ah huh.' Oh, don't laugh. If you are going to be actors and actresses you must learn to speak correctly. Don't say 'can't.' Say 'cahn't.'"

Jeanne would twist her mouth into the shape of a doughnut and say "the poor girl with the world before her," much as Georgia Brown had said it. The stage hand would bellow up to her, through the megaphone of his horny hands, "Your cue, Jennie!" and Jennie —not Jeanne then—would rush down the steps saying, "Oh, it cahn't be time for my entrance. It simply cahn't."

Jeanne learned that the business of being an actress meant work, unceasing work, work and study, and work. But no matter how hard the work, she was eager for it. She wanted people to think she was an actress, long before she was. Her make-up box—bought with part of her cash girl's salary—helped her.

Sitting under her front porch with one of her friends,

she would apply grease paint and eyebrow pencil, and go for a walk, or a street car ride. And, in a loud if childish voice, she would exclaim, for the benefit of passengers, or mere passers-by, "Dear me, I had to come away from the theatre in such a rush I didn't have time to take off my make-up."

It wasn't always easy for Jeanne to attend the theatre, even while she was working. Sometimes she could get a pass, but usually she must have twenty-five cents. This was easy most of the times, but not when she had spent too much for Julie's present. There were times when she had to get the money from the drug store, buy half a dollar's worth of postage stamps, charge them on the family bill—the Eagles were always buying medicines—and sell them for what she could. Usually she could get twenty-five cents for a theatre ticket, and five or ten cents more for caramels or a soda. Candy was almost a requisite. The girls looked at one in a disdainful way if one didn't have a bag of candy for the Sunday matinée.

Jeanne considered herself quite an actress when Richard Carle and his troupe came into Kansas City. She was a member of the stock company, and with Margaret Knowles and others did a specialty dance.

Carle came back stage after one performance to express his appreciation, and to ask if he might pick out two girls to join his company.

Jeanne was transfixed. She stood and stared at the great comedian, her eyes eating him up. If he picked

her—It would be unbearable if he didn't—she couldn't stand it. Of course he would pick her. Wasn't she the best in the company? Think of trouping with Carle! What would her mother say?

Carle picked out Margaret Knowles and another. He saw Jeanne, and he didn't see her. She meant nothing to him. Nothing at all. It was a crushing blow. And Jeanne could have bitten Margaret when she came rushing up to cry out that Carle, the famous Richard Carle, wanted her in his show.

Margaret ran all the way home, two miles, to tell her mother the glad news, and to ask permission to join Carle's company.

"Trouping, is it?" said Mrs. Knowles. "I'll troupe you. Go wash those dishes now, and get this trouping nonsense out of your head."

It was some consolation to have Margaret confide this secret. It gave Jeanne the opportunity to say that her mother wouldn't let her go, either; even if she wanted to go.

II

The Dubinsky Brothers were three. There was Morris, the eldest, who started the family in the show business, an ugly little man with a host of warm friends, a kindly man, a bit gray when Jeanne first knew him, but young in heart, enthusiastic, gay. There was Ed, the middle brother, a tall brute of a man who

was known through half a dozen states as "Handsome Ed." And there was Barney, a smart boy who never said much, a boy who could read your mind, a boy who was willing to do anything he could to make life happier for you.

They were argonauts, these three, men who dreamed, and worked hard to make their dreams come true. None of them knew anything about the show business when they started. But that stopped none of them. They took the bitter with the sweet. They learned through error, and made money.

There are but two of them left today; and they are wealthy. They run moving picture theatres now—and they still have the tent show.

Morris, Jeanne's first great love, died a month after she did.

They hadn't seen many shows, these three brothers. Barney had no idea what a play was like. But once Morris decided that the show was the thing on which to build the family fortunes, the others agreed to help him. In a sense they were argonauts, digging gold out of the prairies and the hills. In a sense they were missionaries, carrying the gospel of the theatre to the unheard-of towns and villages in the middle west.

Men better versed in the theatre have ruined themselves by organizing a group of actors and actresses and producing a play. Wise men fail every month on Broadway.

The Dubinskys may have thought that Hamlet was

a little ham, but they knew what they liked; and once they found a play that pleased them they set about the work of getting players to rehearse it.

When the play was " ready," they took it on the road, with sublime faith in themselves and their company, and played such theatres as there were in Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Oklahoma, Nebraska, and central and western Illinois.

Men of blood and salt, these Dubinskys, men of malleable steel, human, warm, unconquerable. When the play didn't suit they changed it until it did. They watched the audiences for laughs, and for tears. They fired the actors who didn't " get over," and thrust themselves into the vacancies. They bought the rights to other plays, and made them over when they must.

Morris took charge of moving the show from town to town, and doubled as the villain. " Handsome Ed " traveled ahead of the show, making arrangements for its advent, " plugging," pasting up handbills and sticking signs in windows. Frequently he had to get money from an advance sale of tickets to send to Morris before the troupe could travel. These trips were quick, sudden, after the last show. He had to make all arrangements in a day, or half a day, for he must play a part in the show as well as " plug " it. He was the leading man. Barney stayed with the troupe, acted as box office man, and played the juvenile.

When Sarah Bernhardt went to Texas she couldn't find a theatre big enough to hold the audiences she ex-

pected. Someone had the happy idea of building her a huge tent; and taking the tent from one town to the other.

The Dubinskys followed suit, bought canvas and folding seats, and conducted the business of giving shows after the fashion of the circus. The tent could be used only in spring and summer. In the fall and winter the company performed in the "op'ry houses" or the village halls, or what theatres there were.

It was winter, and bitter cold, when the Dubinskys recruited Jeanne Eagels from Al Mackensen's casting office. She was then about fifteen years old, a long legged girl with piles of fine brown hair—it was not bleached until she came to New York—and great shining eyes.

Morris Dubinsky scribbled a name and address on a piece of paper and handed it to Jeanne. She took it as a knight might take his spurs.

"Go there and get your tights," Morris said.

Jeanne went. A dozen other girls had preceded her, for the Dubinskys were casting a musical extravaganza called "Pickings from Puck." They all had to be fitted. Women were busy with tape and pencil and paper.

"What are you?"

"Chorus girl."

"Chorus girl. Bust 32. Neck 11½. Waist ——"

"What are you?" Jeanne was asked when her turn came.

"Specialty dancer," she said, head held high, and nose tilted proudly. "What did you think?"

"You look like a chorus girl to me," was the answer. "But I'll call Dubinsky and make sure."

The costumer had Dubinsky on the phone in a moment, explaining that one of the chorus dames had turned out to be a high class specialty dancer, and asking what he should do about it.

Morris laughed gently.

"Maybe she is," he said. "But give her some tights like the rest of them. I'll find out later about her dancing. I'll keep my eye on that girl. I like that. Specialty dancer, eh? And the only one in the crowd. That's good."

The show went wandering through the middle west in two cars. One car held baggage and scenery. The other held baggage and props and twenty-two people, though the Dubinskys, in order to get the cars, had to pay for twenty-five seats.

The cars were unloaded at a railroad station which was usually a mile or more from the village. Horses and wagons would carry trunks, props, and scenery. The troupers would walk, carrying their luggage.

It was biting cold all that first season, and sometimes, shivering in an attic bed, Jeanne could see the stars through the roof, and wake in the morning to find snow on the patchwork quilt, and solid ice in the bowl and pitcher that rested on the rickety dresser.

She would shiver as she dressed, and hurry down to

the dining room, not so much for breakfast, as for warmth. After breakfast she might venture out for a walk. There was a thrill in having people turn and look at her, a thrill in overhearing the words, "One of the actresses," a thrill in the envious stares of little girls, and even in the suspicious glances of the women. Jeanne might know what those women thought of her —"H'm! One o' them painted play actors. Wonder what kind o' life she leads, traipsin' all over with a passel o' love-makin' men! Kind o' purty though, ain't she?" She might suspect what they were thinking, but what did it matter?

Small towns, she found, were all more or less alike—wide main street with shops and stores on either side, men sitting on the sidewalks in the summer time, sunning themselves, whittling, telling stories, eyeing the women who passed, horses standing somnolent, lazy, switching flies with their tails, a village square where the court-house was, all the churches painted white, and all the schoolhouses painted red. The hotel was always "slap-bang" up against the railroad station—when the railroad station was actually in the town—and you heard all the trains, especially the freights.

But there were trees, and Jeanne loved trees. There weren't many near her home in Kansas City. Here they were common. In summer they made a mosaic of shadows on the street. In the fall they were gorgeous, russet and yellow and orange and brown and red. But in winter they were beautiful! They were

white, lacy, shiny in the sunlight, spectral in the dark, and sometimes stars shone through them.

The theatre might be a regular opera house with a stage and footlights—though there would probably be a post in the middle of the stage; or it might be a bare cold room over a grocery store, with a row of kerosene lamps for footlights, and only a wall to prop the scenery against. Sometimes, but not often, it was a real theatre.

There was seldom a dressing room, even in the best theatres, and never more than one dressing room. The gag always was, "What do you need a dressing room for? Aren't you all on speaking terms with each other?"

The Dubinskys always laughed at this wise-crack, because it was good business to laugh. If there was a dressing room, the girls used it; and the boys dressed out in the alley, if it wasn't too cold, or found a room in the nearest saloon.

Every time the troupe came into a town they would give a parade, with everybody in his best clothes. All the horses obtainable would be used, and those who didn't double in brass, would carry banners and floats. Jeanne, who looked like a child of ten or eleven, usually led the parade.

Jeanne got used to the life, and for all its inconveniences, she loved it—the long walk from the depot, carrying her suitcase, the registering at "The Grand" or "The Palace," or "The Mansion House," the stares

of the traveling men, the assignment of rooms, the parade, the first performance, the sight of strange and enthusiastic audiences, the last curtain, the chilly room, the heavy blankets and quilts, the sudden departure after the last show, to catch the train for the next town, the weary trek to the depot in the dark and the cold, the unheated car, the uncomfortable seat, the forty winks with your neck stiffened by its unnatural position, the arrival at the next town. It was a routine that seldom varied.

Yet it did vary in every town. It varied every night, for every audience was different. People drove in to town from farms miles and miles away, taking mattresses and blankets and pillows in the wagons, so that the tired children might sleep on the way home. Women held babies in their arms, and changed them or nursed them, openly and naturally, while they watched the play. Old soldiers were there, farmers in overalls redolent of the barns, traveling salesmen, the schoolma'am, the village constable—he came to every show to see there was order and decorum, b'gosh!—women who had never seen a show before, and didn't quite know what to do, women who were quite superior and didn't mind letting everybody know it—"I think Mrs. Dull gave a more entertaining performance at our sewing circle the other day when she gave that reading from Browning. Really, she was marvelous, my dear. Now this——" The hotel proprietor was there, and the clerk—who winked when he thought he had your

eye—and some of the men you had seen that afternoon in front of the general store, men with tobacco-stained mustaches and beards, men in corduroys who looked unnatural without a knife in one hand and a stick of wood in the other, men who chawed tobacco all during the performance, and spat on the floor, and applauded with loud voices when the villain took that, and that, and that! There were boys who whistled for virtue triumphant, and hissed the villain when there was dirty work afoot. And there were girls who sat pop-eyed and still all night, and hardly breathed until the curtain fell.

Jeanne loved them all, watching them from the stage. And she was glad that she was there to entertain them. She realized what a show—what any diversion, but especially a show such as this "Pickings from Puck"—meant to these dull, hard-working people. She knew they would talk about the show for weeks, date events from it—"before that Dubinsky show," or after it—and she hoped they would remember her especially, and the little dance that Morris Dubinsky allowed her to give between the acts.

But she was not content to remain a chorus girl, or a specialty dancer. When the chance came for her to take the leading lady's part, she seized it gladly.

Pauline Westerley was the leading lady, until one night in darkest Iowa she lost her job through a sensational incident.

It was in the middle of the first act, and Pauline was

singing her song, when a long-whiskered man jumped out of his seat in the first row and vaulted onto the stage.

Whether he was annoyed by Pauline's charms or her voice, or whether he had filled up on Iowa corn liquor has never been learned. Neither was it ever ascertained whether he had known Pauline before, or whether he had seen her for the first time that evening. He might have been a mere critic. Not that it matters.

He walked across the boards, knocking over a kerosene lamp with his boot, took the amazed young woman by the throat and began to throttle her. The audience realized, in a moment or two, that it was not part of the play and ceased to applaud. The stage people realized the man's mistake at once, but nobody did anything. Pauline's husband fled. Others fled. The Dubinskys, who were not " on " at the time—they were counting up the receipts—were apprised by screams that something had happened.

But before they could lend Pauline a hand, " Props " had rushed to the rescue. He had seen Pauline's hubby diving through an exit, and knew that he wasn't going for a doctor. " Props " picked up a handy crowbar and pried the garroter off his victim.

Pauline was rushed to the doctor's office, and the man to the calaboose. The constable had him by the back of the neck b'gosh, now that " Props " had made him easy to drag; and he lingered in the lockup until after the show had gone.

Pauline was badly hurt. The doctor said it would be weeks before she could play her part again. Jeanne went at once to Morris and told him she knew all Pauline's part, and could play it as well as Pauline, if not better.

Morris consulted Handsome Ed and Barney. They agreed with Jeanne. And so Jeanne became a leading lady at the age of fifteen.

Jeanne played the part the next night, and the audience was vociferous in its applause.

Pauline returned to the theatre in less than a week—as many another sick or injured actress had done—on learning that her understudy was making a hit. She found Jeanne making up to go on.

"I'm back," she said. "Get out of my costume."

"Get out of your costume? Get out of my way."

Pauline struck first. But Jeanne struck second, and with better aim and effect. Pauline resorted to her pitching arm. She threw a bottle of hair tonic. Jeanne ducked. The bottle smashed against a wall. Jeanne retorted with a hair brush. Pauline didn't dodge.

Immediately the air in the dressing room—so-called—was full of flying shoes, powder boxes, grease paints, and various other things. And when everything had been thrown that was to be thrown, the girls stood toe to toe and scratched, and yanked hair, and slapped, and punched, and kicked.

Jeanne was still the leading lady when the show came back to Kansas City.

When Jeanne left, to go with the Dubinskys, she did so against the wishes of her parents. She didn't run away from home. She didn't have to. She went with her mother's grudging consent and the advice, "Well, if you must, I suppose you must. And if you must be an actress, be the best actress in the world." Jeanne promised.

Now that she had returned, a leading lady who had been a chorus girl, Jeanne rushed home and told her mother that she had kept her promise.

But they didn't play "Pickings from Puck" in Kansas City. They put on a melodrama called "Grit, the Newsboy," and Handsome Ed was almost the entire show.

Jeanne was subordinate to him. But do you think she was disheartened at that? Not so. She was playing a real part in a real show in a real city. And if that wasn't "getting somewhere," what was it?

III

JEANNE went with the tent show in the spring, playing repertoire—"Grit, the Newsboy," "For Home and Honor," "The Octoroon," "Little Lord Fauntleroy," "The Two Orphans," "Camille," "Romeo and Juliet," "Buffalo Bill Jr., King of the Cowboys," "Under Two Flags," "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and a score of other plays.

There were eight people in the company, three women and five men, and all plays, even Shakespeare's, had to be cut to fit eight parts. "Handsome Ed," of course, played leads. Morris was the villain. And Barney was the juvenile or the comedian. Marcella Hamilton and Evva Craig were the other girls in the troupe.

Marcella, Evva and Jeanne were on a par as to ability, looks, and love for the theatre, yet only one of them became a star. The others ended their careers when they married.

Jeanne brought Evva Craig to New York and made her David Warfield's leading woman. Evva was headed for stardom, but in 1917 she saw a handsome young man in the uniform of a second lieutenant. And that was the end of her trail.

Jeanne liked Evva, but always called her Eva. Evva insisted on the two v's being sounded. Evva's husband is now a captain assigned to West Point. Jeanne visited her several times, once shortly before she died. West Point didn't interest Jeanne. She told Evva she saw nothing spectacular in the cadets. They were too mechanical, she said. She preferred watching chorus girls.

Morris, as has been said, was short and ugly. Yet when he made up for his villainous parts he was more handsome than Ed. Audiences always hissed him when he crossed the stage, intent on getting the gal into his evil clutches—but it was a sort of benevolent hiss, if a hiss can be considered benevolent.

There wasn't a man, woman, or child, in all the states the tent show traveled who didn't know Morris and like him. Men met him at the depot and shook his hand. Men called to him as he walked down the wooden sidewalks or crossed the tree-pleached streets. Sometimes a local band greeted him as he got off the train, and took part in his parades. Boys and girls asked him for passes. Men asked what they could do to help him.

He was the patriarch, the bishop of many flocks whose religion was drama, a dusty, weary, grinning little man with a friendly hand. Imagine him as the white-livered villain! Put wicked eyebrows and long black mustachios on the face of Santa Claus, put a riding crop into his hands, and give him dastardly

things to do—and how you will hiss him! And how you will enjoy him as you hiss!

Handsome Ed would have made an ideal heavy, a bear of a man with arms like Samson may have had, a great shock of black hair—it was black then though now the frost has found it—a great Roman nose, a pair of piercing bold eyes, a jaw that could scratch a rock, and a voice that boomed melodiously and filled the tent, a voice that rolled out of his barrel of a chest and made the audience shiver with the villain he defied.

But he wasn't the villain. He was the hero, "the matinée idol of the sticks." Girls used to follow him, surreptitiously, they thought. Girls wrote him passionate letters, begging rendezvous, begging photographs, begging a chance to join his company. Girls have been seen standing mute below his lighted window, looking up.

It was Handsome Ed who used to give away the diamond rings, and to take charge of the marriages on the stage. A ring was given away every week. A stage wedding was promised every week.

All the tickets were numbered, and after the last matinée the stubs were put in a hat and a number was drawn. That number won the ring. This ring was always purchased at the local jeweler's on the first day of the engagement, and left in the jeweler's window until the raffle. It never cost more than eight dollars—but people who have won one have treasured it for years. Many of them have served as engagement rings.

The marriage ceremony, somehow, never was performed.

It would be advertised that on Saturday afternoon, before the show, a man and woman of the town were to be married in the tent, "right up on the stage where all you people may witness it." The happy bride and groom would be given a handsome present by the tent show proprietors, and after the ceremony they would be the honored guests at a sumptuous banquet to be held "in the leading hotel of your beautiful city," and the entire company would entertain them royally with songs and dances and "other specialties."

Saturday was chosen because it was market day and families drove in from their farms to buy a week's supply of groceries and salt meats, and "to see the sights."

A great crowd always came to the "wedding" performance, everybody speculating on the identity of the bride and groom. After the last seat had been sold, and just before the curtain was due to rise, Handsome Ed would take the stage and make his announcement.

"Ladies and gentlemen!"

A noisy outburst. Clapping of hands. Cheers. Whistles. Silence.

"Thank you. I have come to make an explanation. You all know that we advertised a wedding here tonight on the stage, and I know you are waiting to see us keep our word. We all like marriages. The men

like to laugh, and the women like to cry. Those who haven't been married see in the ceremony the culmination of romance. Those who have been married see the end of romance.

"But ladies and gentlemen, I must ask your pardon, I am sorry to disappoint you, but, much to our embarrassment and chagrin, the bride-to-be has not appeared!

"However, we have every wish to please you. We have the parson here. We have the bridegroom. We have the wedding ring. We have the clerk who is ready—and I may say eager—to issue the license. And ——

"If there is any young lady in the audience who wishes to take the bride's place, will she kindly step forward?"

There was always a roar at this, always a little hush and a craning of necks, always an urging by woman to woman—"You go up, Sue." "Do it yourself, Sarey" —always an undercurrent of whispers and laughing about the girl who ought to walk up the aisle to the altar on the stage.

"You don't have to be very beautiful," Handsome Ed would continue. "You can be as plain as you like—or you don't like. It makes no difference whether you are blonde, brunette, red-haired, or auburn, or whether you are fat or slim or medium, the young man will marry you now."

Again he would pause, but only for a moment.

"A good man wasted," he would end his announcement. "It's a pity. Seriously, my friends, I regret that we cannot offer you tonight the spectacle we advertised. But if you came to see the marriage and not the show, your money will be refunded to you at the box office."

This was the cue for the orchestra to break into the first act overture, and for the curtain to shoot up. Nobody ever went to the box office for his money.

There were other ways of packing a tent.

Before the show came to town the Dubinskys used to print a small ad in the local newspaper. This was merely to let the moving picture theatre owners know the tent show was coming. Once the tent was up, the Dubinskys plastered the village with handbills, and quit advertising in the paper.

Now the movie theatre men advertised, and the Dubinskys didn't; and it was only human nature for the theatre proprietors, who feared the tent show competition, to egg the editor into attacking the Dubinskys.

The usual argument, the Dubinskys found, was something like this:

"Look here, Mr. Editor, we advertise with you right along, day in, day out, summer, winter, spring, and fall. We belong to the town. We do the town some good. Now along comes this aggregation of tumblers and play actors and no-account canvas men—and they'll ruin us unless you do something about it. They ain't good for this Christian community neither.

Lot of smut, that's all their show is. Are you going to let them get away with it, or is the *Clarion* tainted with their money?"

Of course the *Clarion* wasn't tainted, beyond that small ad; and the editor usually wanted to placate his steady advertisers. So he wrote editorials against the unholy and un-Christian influence of the tent show.

This was exactly what the Dubinskys wanted.

On the night the show opened, the lights would go out. Of course it was always an accident. Coincidences can be accidents, even if they happen every Monday night, don't you think?

The lights went out, and Handsome Ed in his booming voice would blame it on the editor, "or his henchmen," or on "poor deluded wretches misled by his unjust attacks upon us."

A wire had been cut. A fuse had been blown. A plug had been pulled out of a socket. Who did it? Who but the people it would profit to have the tent show fail?—the moving picture men, or their friend, the editor.

The show would play to fair business that night, but on the next night, and every night thereafter, "the house would be sold out."

There was one editor more courageous than prudent, who resented Handsome Ed's insinuations. He started to the tent with a gun, swearing he would kill the actor who had traduced him. Someone raised the cry "Hey, rube!", the signal to the canvas men in all

tent shows and circuses to pick up tent stakes or whatever weapon is handiest and sock all " foreigners " they see.

There was a dangerous riot this night, and the tent was almost wrecked before it subsided.

II

Spring came early to the corn lands that first year Jeanne Eagels went with the tent show. Violets and sweet-william and soft yellow dandelions ran along the muddy roads to cheer the caravan that carried the tents and the actors and the canvas men; for the show traveled in wagons when it could. Apple trees in pink and white and green confusion bade them welcome. Men and women looked up from their plowing and stared, or swung a hat, or waved an arm in greeting. Multi-colored birds flitted above them. The sun shone bright, drying up the mud, bringing color to the barren fields. Even the little towns looked cheerful and inviting.

And Jeanne sat with Morris Dubinsky and cried in rapture over the prodigal beauties of nature. The country was a paradise in spring, a heaven she had never seen before, and never imagined.

Every little while she must leap down from the wagon to pluck a flower, to wade in a clear, cold brook and gather shining stones, to examine a bird's nest fallen from a maple, to talk to a sun-bonneted, bare-

footed woman leaning on a rail fence and smoking a corn-cob pipe.

She drew in great breaths of the clean sweet air, sniffed the aroma of wild flowers and blossoming trees, looked up at the fleecy white clouds floating idly across the blue, and squeezed Dubinsky's hand.

Dubinsky was an old man even then, and Jeanne was not sixteen; yet they loved each other, and before the spring had gone they took each other for better or for worse.

Perhaps Jeanne loved Morris because he was the first man she had ever met who was interested in her. She had not met many men, had known none well except old Mackensen, had cared little for the company of men or boys until she left home to travel with the repertoire show.

Morris loved her because she was young and radiant and talented and exuberantly alive. He watched over her like a zealous father. He saw that she had proper food, a good bed, plenty of rest, plenty of exercise. He gave her all his ideas of acting, fostered her, gave her the best parts in his dramas, saw that her name was featured on the bills. He scolded her when she forgot her rubbers or her muffler, worried when she had a cold, praised her when she bought a warm coat or a pretty dress or had her shoes resoled.

Jeanne's relatives, and some of her closest friends, deny vehemently that she was married to Dubinsky, and that she bore him a child. Others, with equal

vehemence assert that she was both wife and mother. I have no records either of the marriage, or of the annulment that is supposed to have ended it. I have no record to prove that a child was born.

Yet there was a child. And to the best of my knowledge and belief he is still alive.

Jeanne sent a wire from Excelsior Springs, Missouri, just before her sixteenth birthday, saying she was Mrs. Morris Dubinsky now. Later, in Kansas City department stores, she had things charged to "my husband, Morris Dubinsky."

Some months after the marriage—fancied or real—eight of Jeanne's schoolgirl friends went to see the show, and remained to sleep with her. They slept nine in a bed—and the bed broke with their weight.

It was that night that Jeanne told them of her marriage. The ceremony was performed, she said, "in some little town whose name I have forgotten," and a few days later Morris presented her to his mother.

"She hates me," Jeanne told her friends. "I don't blame her much, because I am a Catholic and she is a Jew. I know how my own mother must feel about it. But—I love him. And that's all that matters."

Several times, long after she had left the corn lands, Jeanne revealed parts of her romance to various friends.

Ina Claire's mother was one of these. Jeanne went to her with a telegram from Kansas City, crying, "My baby is dead. My poor little baby!" She wept against

Mrs. Claire's breast, and blamed herself for letting the child be taken from her, and talked of leaving immediately to attend the funeral. But she did not go.

Mrs. Claire told everybody in the company, and they decided to comfort Jeanne in the only way they could. They gave her a party. There was plenty to eat, and plenty to drink. There was always plenty where Richard Carle was. Everybody told funny stories or did funny things. And, although Jeanne did not drink, she was the merriest of all—"the life of the party."

The baby was not dead. Perhaps he was merely ill, and Jeanne believed that he was dying. Perhaps Jeanne was merely dramatizing herself.

Sam Forrest was another of her confidants. He was directing rehearsals for "A Gentleman's Mother," when Jeanne came to him in tears.

"This is a story out of my own life," she said. "I had a boy too, when I was little more than a child—just like the woman I play. Like her I let people take him from me. And I don't know whether he's dead or alive. I don't know whether he's a gentleman or a burglar. He may be a tramp—and I would see him somewhere, and would not recognize him."

Forrest patted her golden hair and dried her eyes on his handkerchief and made her smile again. He thought she was merely romancing, as, in regard to certain details, she undoubtedly was.

She told Clifton Webb about her romance; but

when, teasing her, he called her " Mrs. Dubinsky," she flew at him furiously, and ordered him never to speak to her again.

Morris and Jeanne are both dead. The boy is a grown man, and though he has seen Jeanne Eagels many times, he believes her merely an old friend of his mother's. The name Dubinsky means nothing to him. I don't know that he has ever heard it.

It was impossible, of course, to take an infant along the roads through Iowa and Kansas and Missouri and Oklahoma and Nebraska and Illinois, to carry him on wagon or a train, to leave him in hotels in the care of nurses while his mother sang and danced and acted in the tent. Jeanne had to give him up—or stay alone with him in Kansas City.

It was hard to part with him, to entrust another woman with his upbringing, to give him another name than his own, to place him in an environment that would always be strange to his parents. But it would be intolerable to live alone, away from Morris, away from the tent show, away from the corn lands and the wheat lands, the winding, lazy roads, the rivers and the creeks.

It was better for the boy that he grow up knowing nothing of the gypsy life of his parents, nothing of the theatre, nothing of the one night stands, the sleepless nights, the indifferent food; better that he grow up like other boys, with his own friends, his own home, his own school, his own church. It would be impos-

sible to keep him healthy on the road, to educate him. He would have no friends of his own age, no interests a child should have, no regular hours, no home of any kind.

And it was better for Jeanne. She realized that she could never be a real mother to her son. She was not meant for motherhood. She was meant for a career. She must give herself only to the drama. Something in her would not let her quit the theatre. She was what she was, and she could not help it. She did not make herself. She could not change herself. She was an actress. And though she might give birth, she could not be "all mother."

She gave up her child, but she kept in touch with him always. She saw him as often as she could. She saw that he wanted for nothing.

Many times Jeanne Eagels wept because she was not like other women, because she was not a woman with a husband and a child, because she was only an actress who must go on and on until she died, lonely, tired, disillusioned with illusion, spending her emotions on strangers, feigning the passions she longed to feel.

"What have I out of life?" she would ask.

She had everything she ever dreamed of having. Not one wish was left unfulfilled. She had all that she desired.

But there are millions and millions of women who would not have traded places with her.

III

In 1918 Handsome Ed Dubinsky came to New York on business, bringing with him a banker from Cedar Rapids. Jeanne Eagels was playing "Daddies" in the Belasco theatre, and the actor and the banker went to see her. She was not a great star then, or she had not been recognized as such, but she was "Belasco's newest find," and on her way to stellar honors.

Jeanne was delighted to see Handsome Ed, and gladly accepted his invitation to supper.

She asked about Morris, and Marcella Hamilton, and Evva Craig, and Barney, and many of the canvas men and ushers and pop-corn boys. She remembered their names, and what they looked like. She mimicked some of them, for the banker's amusement, and she talked for hours of her tent show days.

She pictured the dollar a day hotels—"with meals, unless you ate the food set on the traveling salesmen's table, when it was a dollar and a quarter." She talked of the waitresses, and their invariable question, "Beef, chicken, pork, or mutton? Beef's good today. Tea, coffee, or milk?"

She spoke of floods, of horses dragging the wagon out of mud hole and morass, of winds that threatened to upset the tent, and of times when actors quit spouting lines on the stage to grab a hammer or a mallet or a rock and drive the tent stakes further into the ground.

She talked of the week when the tent was marooned in a little Oklahoma town because of swollen rivers, and of the six new plays written in that time by Lem Parker, the playwright who traveled with the show.

"We had run out of our repertoire," she explained, "but, as long as we couldn't get out, we had to give a new play every night. We rehearsed them as soon as Lem finished them, and gave them the next night."

"Give Lem a bottle of whisky and an idea," Dubinsky said, "and he'd have a play finished before the bottle was empty. One of his plays, 'The Elder Brother,' is still being produced in the middle west, and still getting a big hand."

Jeanne talked of the baseball team made up of actors and canvas men, that played with local nines—as an ad for the show more than for pleasure.

"We were playing a tough team in Shawnee, Oklahoma," said Ed, "and we were losing, 1 to 0 in the ninth. There was one man on base when I got up to bat, two out, and two strikes on me. I got to thinking that if I happened to make a home run and win the game we'd pack the tent that night. We'd been playing to bad business all week, and needed one good night to set us even.

"The ball came right down the groove, and I knocked it out of the lot. It was a homer, of course. We won the game. And that night we played to the rottenest business of the season. There wasn't eighty dollars in the house."

They talked of the band concerts held after the Saturday matinées, with the actors doing specialty numbers, and the musicians watching the clock and waiting for dinner time.

"We sold pop, peanuts, chewing gum, candies and pop-corn at first," Jeanne said, "but we found the peanuts made too much noise. We couldn't compete with them. I'd be saying, 'Stand back, you cu-uh, foah my trigguh finguh's itchin' bad,' and the audience would be listening to some oaf cracking peanut shells. Pop wasn't so noisy, nor pop-corn."

The old days had rushed back into Jeanne's remembrance. She was living them again, loving them, talking of them with a voice that caressed and lingered wistfully on each memory.

"And the costumes. You wouldn't believe it—how we bought them at the bargain counters in the little frame stores, and made them over. The Dubinskys never hired anybody who didn't have a trunk full of their own costumes that could be used in emergencies; and we didn't put on a costume play if we could get something like 'Blue Jeans.' But when we had to have costumes we bought the material and made them, or bought what gowns we could and made them over.

"You should have seen Marcella Hamilton's costume when she played 'Cross Bar Kate,' in 'Buffalo Bill Jr., the King of the Cowboys'; and you should have seen the way she strutted across the stage. And oh, tell him about the young actor who played one of

the cowboys, and how he fell off his hired horse in one of our street parades, and almost disgraced us. People said we were fine cowboys! They swore we'd never been west of Des Moines.

"And tell him of the men we saw killed in Oklahoma, right out in the street in front of our hotels. It was nothing to see a man dropped out of his saddle, or to wake up in the middle of the night hearing revolver shots. We got used to it.

"And the ground of Oklahoma, Ed, tell him how solid it is—how hard to hammer tent stakes into. Tell him about the bleacher seats that might have collapsed and killed a lot of people because nobody knew how to fasten them. Tell him about the cyclone——"

"We've had all sorts of near accidents," Ed interrupted, "but never a real one."

"And the plays we played—'The Littlest Rebel,' 'East Lynne,' all the shows of New York, all the hits of London, all the dramas Bernhardt played, all the things Lem Parker wrote, and Shakespeare and Ibsen and Molière and Clyde Fitch, trimmed into eight parts and played sometimes without rehearsals. Tell him about the night you almost froze to death."

"I used to go ahead of the show," Ed said, "carrying a suitcase, a typewriter, and a mimeograph machine. This night I fell asleep in the smoker. We never traveled in Pullmans anyway. I fell asleep and rode past my station. The conductor put me off at the next stop, three miles away. It was a little after

midnight, and cold enough to turn a brass monkey into ice. I couldn't get a rig. There wasn't any telephone. There wasn't any hotel. I walked back along the tracks, three miles, with the suitcase and the typewriter and the mimeograph growing heavier with each step, slipping on the ties, falling, getting up again, wishing I had a drink, running now and then to keep warm. After hours and hours I got to the station. It was dark, deserted. The town was down the road somewhere, and there were roads leading four different ways. I picked one and walked and ran, and walked, falling asleep, waking up, falling, carrying the damned suitcase and typewriter and mimeograph machine that now weighed tons. My hands were almost frozen to the handles. And if you don't think I cried with happiness to see lights and find the hotel, you're crazy."

"I'll bet you slept like a top that night," said the banker.

"Sleep? I slept on the train. I had to stay up all night making handbills, and I had to get out early in the morning and paste them up all over the town. I got no sleep until after the performance that night—and then I slept in a smoking car going to the town three miles away."

They talked, the three of them, until the dawn came stealing in, to dissolve visions, to change dreams in retrospect into actualities.

When they rose from the table the banker took Jeanne's hand and kissed it.

"What a life you've led," he said. "How I envy you!"

IV

For more than six years Jeanne Eagels played with the Dubinskys, through the corn and wheat lands, Shawnee, Osceola, Marysville, Tick Ridge, Bethany, Algona, Strawberry Point, Salina—all the little towns one sees only on county maps, and all the college towns, and all the big towns in five states.

In the spring, the summer, and the early fall, she played in the tent. In the late fall and the winter she played the town halls and the "op'ry houses" and the little theatres.

They paid her $18 a week when she came to the troupe. When she left she was getting $25.

And all during these years, traveling by wagon or by train, walking through corn fields or scarlet and gold woods, playing in the tent or the town hall, she dreamed of Broadway, and her name in electric lights, and smartly dressed people stampeding the box office to get tickets, and newspapermen besieging her for interviews and photographs.

She slept in fusty airless hotels, and dreamed of a home where brilliant men and women would be glad to visit her and pay her homage.

She looked at a field of corn, or buckwheat, or oats, or rye, and saw a metropolitan audience swept into a

frenzy by her acting. She listened to the thunder of a waterfall, and heard the clapping of hands. She quarreled with Morris and with Handsome Ed, when they talked of her talent and her beauty.

"Must I play all my life in the tank towns?" she cried. "Must I grow old in warmed-over plays? Oh yes, it's great to call me the Bernhardt of the sticks—but I am the greatest actress in the world, and I don't belong in the sticks."

The time was coming when she would be called "The Rejane of America," and the "Yankee Bernhardt." But nobody watching Jeanne pack her battered trunk would believe it.

The vision of Broadway was too tempting to resist; the life of the tent show actress too prosaic longer to endure. Her trunk was tossed into a wagon. She brushed off her blue serge suit—the uniform of the one night stand and the tent show actress—jammed her hat over her unruly brown hair, wept a little, laughed a little, gave Morris and Ed and Barney each a little kiss, hugged and kissed Marcella Hamilton and Evva Craig, and hurried to the depot and the train for Kansas City. She must go home to see her family, before she tried New York.

IV

RICHARD CARLE was playing in Kansas City, she learned, and he needed a girl, a chorus girl who could speak a line without giving way to stage fright. Jeanne went to see him, and he hired her—for $25 a week.

The girls in the dressing room, a real dressing room in a real theatre, stared at her in amazement when she came in. Her eyes blazed from a face the sun and wind had failed to tan. Her blue serge suit had lost its glory on many a dusty road. Her hair came tumbling down when she removed her awkward and outmoded hat.

Who was this scarecrow, this half-starved, tired girl in the cheap mean clothes? they asked themselves. She spoke with an eastern accent, but there was Kansas in her face, or was it Iowa? She was sullen. They resented her. She made them feel uncomfortable. She seemed to think she was their superior. Perhaps she would take Edna Wallace Hopper's job, and give Richard Carle lessons in the art of getting laughs. Huh! She had probably played Ophelia at her Sunday school, and thought she was a star.

Jeanne didn't talk much to the girls—not for the first few weeks. She felt shy, out of place, embarrassed in their company. Their talk was strange to her. It

was a patter she didn't know. They had secrets shared in common they would not reveal, a camaraderie she could not define. And her first attempts to be one of them were unfortunate.

"I was a leading lady at twelve," she would say. "I played Juliet at fourteen. I've played everything that Sarah Bernhardt's played. I'm not a chorus girl. I'm a dramatic actress."

She would look away from them as she talked, or through them, seeing perhaps an audience of farmers, a rude stage, and Handsome Ed leaning over her, whispering in his voice that filled the tent:

"Courage, Camille. You will live until spring!"

She was shy, but she was hard and bitter too for many weeks, and it was patent that something troubled her, something she didn't talk about, something she couldn't talk about. Thoughts would come to her suddenly, to change a laugh into a look of pain.

After the strangeness of the new life had worn off she became more friendly, and revealed little glimpses of her past life, told little secrets of her family that built her into a romantic personage.

"My father was a Spaniard. His real name was Aguilar, which means Eagle. He changed it to Eagels. He's an artist, one of those indolent romantic geniuses there's no accounting for. I remember him leading me by the hand in Juarez, Mexico—my earliest recollection of him—taking me to see my first bull fight. I remember him playing and singing in a Mexican

cantina, and men clapping him on the back, and buying him drinks.

"He could play a guitar. He could draw a picture with a few turns of his wrist and a quick little touch here, and a line or two there, that would be surprisingly true. But he loved to gamble and to drink.

"Me? I've been an actress all my life. My mother was Irish. That much I know about her. I don't remember her very well. I went away with my father when I was a kid. I played in circuses, in tent shows, in carnivals, in big theatres, and little theatres. I used to ride a big white horse in the circus, but he stumbled one day and threw me, and I broke my arm."

The scarecrow became part and parcel of the "Jumping Jupiter" company, a good scout, a regular fellow, and at times "the life of the party."

She studied Edna Hopper as she had studied Eva Lang, and it wasn't long until she spoke to the chorus girls—and made them jump—with Edna's voice, and in Edna's manner. She used to keep them laughing all the time with cruel—but true—imitations of Carle, and Edna Hopper, and Ina Claire, and everybody else in the troupe.

Ina Claire was doing imitations at the time, and doing them well.

But Jeanne's imitations, given in the dressing room, were more appreciated by the girls. There was always a laugh now, wherever Jeanne was. When all else failed to raise the laugh, she would lift her skirts

high enough to show her funny legs. That always "got 'em."

Jeanne and Helen Broderick, now one of the finest comediennes on the American stage, became fast friends. They rode the baggage trucks from the depot to the hotel. They unmade the Pullman berths the porter had just made, and fixed the sheets so the other girls would have difficulty getting between them. They tied knots in somebody's silk pajamas. There was no dignity, no reverence in them, nothing but fun.

And usually where you found Jeanne and Helen, you found Steve Crawford who was in love with Helen. Jeanne did everything she could to promote their romance. She wanted Helen to be married. But she had no idea of repairing her own matrimonial break. She was having too good a time flirting with stage-door Johnnies.

Chorus girls and stage-door Johns, it seems, take to each other naturally, and Jeanne did plenty of "Johnning" in her days with Richard Carle. She loved nothing more than baiting some traveling salesman with her beauty and her charm, and the possibility that she might succumb to his impetuous or hesitant overtures. She never did succumb, although she always promised that "the next night, when she wasn't so busy"—or the night after that—she might let him take her for a ride in the park, "after supper."

"Johnning" was a battle of wits, Jeanne figured. The John was willing to pay for the show girl's dinner

and to buy her flowers, or a hat, or a pair of fancy gloves, or a five-pound box of bonbons.

But he thought that whatever he spent was too much to pay simply for the privilege of being seen in her company, for the sake of bragging, "I was out with her last night—isn't she a peach? And what a mama! If you only knew!", or even for the pleasure of telling her all about himself.

He wanted a kiss or two besides all these intangible things—and each man had his own way of leading up to his request for payment. One showed pictures of his wife and children, spoke of his love for them, talked of his lonesomeness without them and pointed out how sweet it would be if the sympathetic little girl would just give him a nice friendly kiss to brighten that lonesomeness.

Another had the direct approach—"Kid, you're the sweetest baby I've seen since I left God's town. Come here and give me a kiss." A third would be romantic —"I shall never forget you. Never. I never saw you until tonight. I shall probably never see you again. I'm leaving on the 8:03 tomorrow morning. Won't you give me the balm of your lips—hello and good-bye —for just one bitter-sweet moment? One kiss——"

"To hell with them," was Jeanne's thought. "They're all alike. They all think chorus girls are loose as a bachelor's buttons. They all think they can feed you and kiss you at will. Make 'em suffer!"

One man promised to buy her a hat, a red hat that

was priced at $25 in the best millinery store in town. And Jeanne wanted that hat more than anything else in the world—at that time. It was delivered to her at the stage door, and she put it on. It fitted perfectly over her mass of hair. It brought out all her loveliness.

"I'm going to keep it," Jeanne said.

"Don't be a fool," said Helen.

"A fool? I'm not."

"You'll have to pay for it."

"Not I. I'm leaving now. And if you see that Johnny hanging around the stage door, tell him I had a headache and went home early. Say I must have forgotten all about my date with him."

Jeanne walked out, wearing the beautiful red hat.

The next afternoon, at her hotel, she received a letter to which the man had signed his name. It upbraided her. It called her a cheap sport, a bluffer, a girl who made a promise and didn't have the nerve to keep it, a girl who made a promise she didn't mean to keep, that she might secure something she did not deserve.

"No man can say I'm a cheap skate," Jeanne said. "No man can write me a letter like that and get away with it."

"What can you do?" asked Helen.

"I'll give him his hat back. I guess he was right about me."

Jeanne went downstairs, carrying the hat in her

hand, and spoke to the clerk. She laughed gayly when she learned that her John was in the dining room with his wife.

"His wife? I might have known it."

She tipped the bell-boy and had him deliver the hat to the man who had bought it for her.

"Take it right into the dining room," she said, "and put it on the table. There are no explanations, unless he cares to make them to his wife."

II

The "Jumping Jupiter" company was playing Washington, D. C., when Ed Eagles died. Jeanne did not go to his funeral. She could not leave the show. Stage people are slaves in many ways.

The blow was a hard one, but she knew that her father must die. She had been home a month before, and had spent several days with him, telling him stories of her life with the musical comedy troupe, amusing him with her mimicries, elating him with manufactured stories of what Carle had said to her and, more important, what she had said in answer. She led him to believe that she was making more money than she knew what to do with, and that she could support the family indefinitely.

"You're a fine girl, Gee-Gee," he said. "I'm proud of you. We're all proud of you."

He hardly took his eyes off her while she was in the

room, and when she left he watched the doorway until she reappeared.

She helped "Julie" make tasty little dishes for him. She put on an apron and washed and dried the dishes, humming a tune from the show, and throwing him a word now and then over her shoulder. She scrubbed the floor, while he looked on, sitting in an easy chair, weak, helpless, but happy.

In some moods nothing pleased Jeanne Eagels so much as getting a bucket of water, a bar of soap, and an old rag, and "putting on a scrubbing scene." Even when she was the celebrated Jeanne Eagels, and the hostess to high and mighty actors and producers, she might be seen with an old towel wrapped around her head, an old calico apron over her frilly negligée, and a soapy gray rag or a scrub brush in her hand. She might—and she might not.

Ed Eagles was a tall man, lean, blue-eyed, serious, silent, and mild. The children who played with Edna and Jeanne and Helen were always frightened when they looked up and saw him, though they never knew why. He was kind to them. He seldom reproved them. He worked when he could. But there are times when building operations are slow, or suspended altogether. No carpenter works the year around in Kansas City, or any other city—even the sunlit cities in Florida and California.

Jeanne never quite understood him, but she loved him, and she was proud of him. She might describe

him as a gay and reckless ne'er do well artist from Spain, a rover, a gambler, and a happy-go-lucky guitar-playing ladies' man. But what chorus girl is remembered as the daughter of a poor, honest, hard-working carpenter? That's one of the many queer things about the stage. It makes no difference who your mother is, but your father must be a glamorous and romantic figure—if you have a father. If you cannot invent a fascinating devil of a sire, kill him in your infancy—and kill him with dramatic suddenness.

Jeanne's father died after a lingering illness that had kept him out of work for months; and had it not been for the money Edna brought home, and the money Jeanne sent from all the little towns the tent show visited, the family might have been turned out of their home. Ed Eagles was a failure, you may say, a poor, meek, unambitious man.

But if you think Jeanne was ashamed of him, you wrong her memory.

When she was playing "Rain" in Kansas City, one of the girls who had gone to school with her came to the theatre. Jeanne had no time for her; and the girl wrote to ask why.

"Is it because I knew you when you were poor," she asked, "and your father was only a carpenter?"

Jeanne answered:

"I don't want to see you because I never liked you. You always bored me. My father was not the only carpenter who was poor. There was a carpenter who

was born in Bethlehem, and perhaps you say your prayers to him now."

Jeanne told the "Jumping Jupiter" girls that her father was dead. A cable had informed her mother. A cable from Barcelona—or was it Valladolid? She wasn't sure. How did he die? The cable was brief, and didn't say.

Jeanne mended her old stockings, wore her old shoes, took care of her old blue serge suit—for it would have to last her a long time now—and sent home a few dollars more every week, until the show hit Providence, R. I., and piled up.

She was out of work; but New York was only a sleeper jump away.

New York! Her goal! New York, the magic city that actors and actresses have but to enter to find fat contracts waiting to welcome them!

Jeanne and a girl named Lois wedged themselves into a hall bedroom somewhere in the Forties and lived for a week or two on money they had borrowed from Richard Carle.

"We've got to meet the best people in order to get by in this town," said the practical Lois. "So for heaven's sake get rid of that tacky suit and that fireman's helmet you call a hat. If we're going to cut in on the big dough we've got to look like money. You can wear one of my dresses for a while. It won't be long."

Both girls knew—they read the papers—that ladies

of the chorus always married Wall Street brokers. Of course a girl playing in a big Broadway show had an easy time. The millionaire saw her from out front and came around to the stage door, bringing a basket of orchids with a thousand dollar bill peeping shyly from it, and his card on which he had written, "Meet me after the show—at the Little Church Around the Corner."

But how were two girls who were not playing in any show to meet this type of man? The answer was simple. Millionaires were to be found eating lobster and drinking champagne in the swell hotels like the Waldorf and the Claridge and the Astor and the Knickerbocker and the McAlpin. All a girl had to do was to meet them socially.

So Jeanne and Lois went hunting millionaires.

They feasted on crackers and milk, and at luncheon, and at dinner they went to the dining rooms of the swell hotels to find their prey. Their entrance into a dining room was usually a sensation. They came in chatting volubly of the wonderful luncheon or tea they had eaten at some Great Neck or Larchmont home; and, when they were seated in some conspicuous place, they would have no appetite. All they wanted was coffee.

They would sit for an hour or more over their coffee, laughing and talking and stealing glances at various men who might be millionaires. But nothing ever happened.

Some days they would drink as many as ten cups of coffee. It was a long time before they learned that only out-of-town buyers, people in New York on a holiday, and people putting up a front, frequented these restaurants.

Between coffee jags, Jeanne and Lois went from agency to agency and asked for jobs. They waited for hours in the outer offices of theatrical producers. They tried to get into theatres where shows were in rehearsal, or stood outside the stage doors where they might just happen to meet the very man who was looking for their types. They read every advertisement in the theatrical papers, and looked up everybody they knew in New York.

There was nothing for them in New York, and their money had vanished when Jeanne learned that a musical comedy company was leaving on a special train for Chicago. There were no jobs open, but the manager assured Jeanne he would be only too glad to give her and her friend "a free ride to Chicago and free eats on the way."

"You're very kind," said Jeanne.

"We're paying for a whole train," she was told, "and it won't cost us anything to take you along."

"Like the Dubinskys," Jeanne exclaimed. "Buying twenty-five tickets for twenty-two people. Sometimes we carried an extra passenger just to get even with the railroad."

The route manager laughed.

Jeanne Eagels in an early production

"That's the idea," he said. "But what the hell's a dubinsky?"

Chicago was tough for a time. There wasn't any work, and few—so very few—willing to loan any money. The girls might have starved if Lois hadn't met a susceptible old man, a New Yorker who was in Chicago on business.

Jeanne and Lois rode back to New York in a stateroom. And Jeanne got a job, in the chorus of "The Mind the Paint Girl," a Ziegfeld production.

The selection of a Ziegfeld chorus was then, as now, a merciless ordeal. Many are called but few are chosen. The girls are made to put on bathing suits and to stand in a line while a keen-eyed man looks them over. His glance is cold, impersonal, all-seeing—and final. It kills as frost kills. One by one girls wilt—and disappear. Girls with legs remain, girls with lovely bodies, girls with beautiful hands and faces. Legs count most. Faces next. Brains mean nothing, talent little.

The chosen few stand in line, and are asked to dance, to sing. Again they are winnowed. They are asked to pose, to walk across the stage, to hold their arms so, to stand this way and that. And a few more go, never to return. Girls have stayed for weeks and weeks in these tests, only to vanish on the last day.

Jeanne passed all the tests, and they meant nothing to her. She didn't particularly care to be a chorus girl, but she felt that she must eat.

There is a legend to the effect that Ziegfeld offered Jeanne $150 a week if she would stay with the show—this after she told him she was leaving—and that she refused, saying, "Mr. Ziegfeld, I am a dramatic actress."

Probably some press agent founded the legend, but it sounds very much like Jeanne.

She had met Helen Broderick shortly after she began rehearsals with "The Mind the Paint Girl," and Helen—now the wife of Steve and living with him in a little flat in 67th Street—remonstrated with her.

"Why must you be a chorus girl?" she asked.

Jeanne laughed.

"It's only an 'in' for me," she said. "I've been promised a part in 'The Rosary,' but I have to live until I get it."

"I can give you a room," Helen said. "Come on up to the flat. And for the love of—you've bleached your hair!"

Helen was almost angry.

"I'm a blonde," Jeanne said. "Isn't it lovely?"

"Yes. But it was more than lovely before you fooled with it."

It was Lois who had induced Jeanne to become a blonde. Lois knew the possibilities of blondes, and shortly after Jeanne bleached her hair, Lois' friend invited Jeanne to dinner, to meet his friend, a man closely allied with the great financial house of Kuhn, Loeb & Co.

"He's a multi-millionaire," Lois told her. "Be nice to him."

He was an elderly gentleman who believed that diamonds spoke louder than words, and dazzled a girl's conscience as well as her eyes. It took a diamond to trump a heart, he used to say.

Jeanne didn't care for him; but she accepted his gifts, thousands and thousands of dollars' worth of gowns and jewels, consented to live in the apartment he furnished for her, let him pay for her maid, and her automobile and her chauffeur. But she always held him off.

Again it was a battle of wits. The millionaire was but a glorified John, and she had learned how to handle Johns of all sorts. This man could help her, not only financially but in many other ways—and now that she was out of a job she needed help. She had left Ziegfeld. She had played in "The Rosary." The show had "folded up," and there was nothing to do. She wasn't going to live on Helen and Steve. And she must send money home.

"Dear, please don't hurry me," she would say. "I'm trying to love you. Give me a little time. You've been so kind and sweet and patient! You've been so big! I respect you so much, but——" There was always a "but."

She mimicked the old man to her friends and compared him to another old man, one with a beard, whom she had "stood up" in Chicago. She "had made a

date" with this man, and had watched him as he stood on the corner waiting for her. She watched him for three hours, saw him begin to smile at every young woman who came toward him, saw the smile change into a frown of annoyance when his near-sighted eyes were convinced he had made a mistake, watched him tug at his whiskers impatiently—"and they were way down to here"—and laughed until she cried when he finally walked down the street disgusted.

Jeanne's millionaire took her to shows and dinners, and gave parties for her to which he invited influential people. He introduced her to his banker and broker friends; and, listening to their talk, and asking them questions, Jeanne learned more than most people ever learn about finance, though somebody else always had to take charge of her finances.

At a party in Southampton, Jeanne met an old friend, an actress who had divorced one millionaire, and felt she could stand another. She was a little over middle age, however, though she looked young, and found eligible millionaires a bit shy.

It occurred to her that by using Jeanne's youth and loveliness as bait, she could entice many men into her presence. And with her knowledge of men it would be simple to trap one of them.

She volunteered to buy gowns and jewels for Jeanne and to take her to Europe, paying all expenses. There are more rich Americans in London and Paris and the Cote D'Azure than there are in America. And they

love to flock around beautiful—and rich—and blonde —American girls.

Jeanne was fascinated with the idea, not only because it would take her abroad, but because it would also take her away from the old man and his money. The old boy was beginning to be a pest. She'd have to get rid of him soon or later anyway. What better way than this?

The elderly financier didn't care much for the idea; but Jeanne's serene blue eyes, her whispered hint, "perhaps, when I come back," her wistful desire to "visit the grave of her father—in Castile," and her promise to be "very, very good," made him eager to pay her way.

She sailed within the week, leaving him at the pier, a desolate old man with tears in his eyes. And as the boat slipped into the North River, Jeanne danced a jig, and pulled imaginary whiskers.

She stayed in Europe for over a year—until the older woman, people still talk of her as a "perennial flapper," got her millionaire.

In London Jeanne went to all the shows and studied all the players. Her Eastern accent became British. In Paris she received the first real dramatic training of her life. She met Beverly Sitgraves, an American woman who had played with Bernhardt on the French stage. She taught Jeanne everything the divine Sarah had taught her.

It was like Jeanne to make the most of every oppor-

tunity, to turn playtime into a study period, to educate herself by whatever means availed. The technique she learned from Beverly Sitgraves, and the accent she acquired in London, carried her far in her career.

She used the accent sometimes in private life, to impress strangers or to annoy friends.

Beatrice Lillie, a Canadian girl who married into the peerage—she is Lady Peel—once took Jeanne to task for her affected manner of speaking.

"Oh, la-de-da," she said. "Aren't you being a little bit British tonight, Jeanne?"

Jeanne laughed good naturedly. "Yes, darling," she answered. "Aren't we both?"

In Paris Jeanne met Edna Wallace Hopper, and they were having lunch in Ciro's when Julian Eltinge appeared. Miss Hopper called him over and introduced him.

Eltinge liked Jeanne.

"I hope you are an actress," he said.

"Nobody who knew me ever denied that," said Jeanne.

"Great. I think I have a part for you. I'm going into a show called 'The Crinoline Girl,' and I think you're just the foil I need. I make up as a brunette. You're a lovely slim blonde. Your voice is exactly right too. If you can live on $75 a week, the part is yours."

"The part is mine," said Jeanne. "When do we sail?"

As soon as she had returned to New York Jeanne went to her flat, took all the jewels the financier had given her, wrapped them in a neat package, and sent them back to him. Then she moved her clothes and her shoes and her hats and her toilet articles out of the flat, rented a room of her own, and called up Eltinge.

"When do we start rehearsing?" she demanded.

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V

AL WOODS came to see the rehearsals for "The Crinoline Girl," and stared at the blonde his star had picked.

"Where did you find her?" he demanded. "She's not the type at all. She can't act. Her voice is awful. And she doesn't do a thing she's told."

Eltinge laughed.

"She can't rehearse. She has to have an audience watching her. Wait until you see her first real performance before you judge her. If you don't like her then, get rid of her. And Belasco will take her."

Then Woods laughed too.

"That's great. 'And Belasco will take her!' Well, have it your own way, but she looks like a dish of raspberries to me."

Woods changed his mind, as other producers did, when he saw Jeanne on the opening night.

"I must be getting old," he wailed. "Why, she's great. She's wonderful. When you're through with her, I want her."

Eltinge was fond of Jeanne, and took her everywhere. He treated her as though he were her father, and took pains to make her popular. He knew everybody Jeanne wanted to meet, knew their failings and their hobbies, their virtues and their vices. Jeanne

was eager to meet people who could help her, and Eltinge was invaluable to her. He not only saw that she met them, but he told her exactly how to treat them.

"You'll have to humor him. You've got to tell her she's clever. Talk to that man about clothes. He's a bug on crepe de chine. Ask this fellow about his hunting lodge. And talk to that chap about his second act. He's having trouble with it again."

And Jeanne did much for Eltinge in the way of establishing him as a virile, rough and tumble sort of man who poked other virile men in the eye when they made remarks about him. Everybody knew Eltinge as the world's finest female impersonator, but few had any idea that he hated the work, and that he'd much rather be Bill Dalton than Julian Eltinge. Jeanne was ever his champion.

The scene in the depot of a little town in Indiana is typical.

The company had got off the train and were walking toward the exit, when a tall thin man approached and stopped and looked solemnly at Eltinge.

He leered. Tobacco juice drooled from the corners of his mouth.

"I want to see the man who puts on women's skirts and cavorts around like a gal," he said.

Eltinge stepped forward, his right fist ready. But Jeanne stepped in front of him.

"Oh, that brute," she said. "He came to town

ahead of us, and I don't doubt that he's in some corner saloon now, getting drunk and beating somebody up, or raising hell with women."

Jeanne roomed with Jane Marbury while she played with "The Crinoline Girl," kept away from Johns, stayed sober all the time—she had drunk nothing at all in Europe, and little in New York—and sent money to her mother every week.

She was happy now, independent, free forever from the aged financier, earning good money, responsible to no one but Eltinge, and she felt she was fast becoming recognized as "the greatest actress in the world."

The financier had pursued her for a time. He had learned that she was rehearsing with Eltinge. He had come again and again to the theatre, trying to see her, trying to get a note to her. She would not see him. She would not take his notes. She would make no explanations. He sent her jewels back to her. She returned them. She went by him with her little nose in the air, and wouldn't speak to him.

He followed her on the road. He was in the audience every night, for months, wherever "The Crinoline Girl" was playing. Every night he sent back his card. It was always ignored.

Many men and women have referred to Jeanne Eagels as a wanton gold digger. Many men gave her jewels, and limousines, and other costly presents. Sometimes she took them. Sometimes she didn't. Jewels meant little to her. She gave them away, or she

lost them, or she left them lying around where thieves were sure to see them. It was her proud boast in her latter days that all the jewelry and all the clothes she had she had bought with money she had earned.

She went to Eltinge the night the financier's cards stopped coming.

"I guess he's gone," she said. "I'm glad. I hope I never see him again. A girl can live and be self-respecting on $75 a week. That's all I want. If I hadn't been damn near starving when I met that old pirate I wouldn't have taken a cent from him."

The happiest days of Jeanne's life were spent with "The Crinoline Girl" company. It was a big cast, and like the "Jumping Jupiter" troupe, "one big happy family."

The stay in Chicago was especially happy, for the city welcomes stage people and makes much of them. There are get-together dinners and parties after the show, receptions at some club in the loop or the north shore; and now and then all the actors and actresses playing in Chicago theatres hold a masquerade ball, or perhaps only a masquerade party.

There is a picture of Jeanne and other players now hanging on the wall of Eltinge's home in Los Angeles. It was taken at a masquerade party in the Rose Room of the Sherman Hotel and in the group are Eltinge, David Warfield, Tommy Meighan, Mabel Taliaferro, Rapley Holmes—who later played with Jeanne in "Rain"—Fannie Brice, Harry Ridings, Irene Frank-

lin, Lulu Glaser, Frances Ring, Donald Brian, La Petite Adelaide, Tommy Ross, Adele Ritchie, William Camp, Tom Kerrigan, and many others you might recognize.

At one masquerade Eltinge was dressed as a Chinese mandarin, and Jeanne as a Chinese empress. At another Jeanne was a bowery tough.

Jeanne met Ina Claire at one of these parties. Ina was then the star of "The Quaker Girl" and she had things to say about Jeanne's bleached hair and broadened accent.

"You're making a fool of yourself," was one of these things. "Your own hair was much more beautiful and much more becoming; and your new accent is more or less silly. That kind of stuff won't get you anywhere."

"Wait and see, darling," was all Jeanne answered.

It was in Chicago that Jeanne saw Elsie Ferguson playing Miriam in "The Outcast." She was carried away with the rôle. She saw herself in the part, a fine emotional rôle, and felt she would be much more effective than Elsie.

When the curtain came down on the first act she turned impulsively to Eltinge. "That's what I want to do," she said. "That's what I ought to do. I'm a dramatic actress. I'm better than Elsie Ferguson. I'm better than anybody. Oh, I must have that part. And some day I will have it."

"Sure you will," Eltinge answered, not believing a word of it. Jeanne was all right in the little part she

had in "The Crinoline Girl"—but to do this sort of stuff? She wasn't the type. She was just a little scatter-brain who laughed at everything, and made a joke of everything—even her own illnesses.

"I have played better parts than that," Jeanne said. "Oh no, I haven't. This is beautiful. But I've played everything."

Eltinge thought it was all a joke until Jeanne's trunk was delivered to his room by mistake. It was the most hopeless looking trunk Eltinge had ever seen. It was made of cane and tin. It was dented. It was soiled. It was old and unhinged. Its old-fashioned oval top was held onto its shapeless bottom with stout pieces of rope, and there was a gash in its side out of which a number of pictures had fallen. It had come from Kansas City, and though it was addressed to Jeanne Eagels, it was delivered to Julian Eltinge, probably because the hotel porter had seen only the huge black initials "J. E." that were painted on its front.

Jeanne was striding up and down her room when Eltinge's Japanese valet brought the trunk to her. She had believed it lost, and was furious about it.

"I could have kissed that Jap," she told Eltinge half an hour later. "You can't imagine how I love that impossible old thing. I carried it for nearly seven years all over the sticks."

Eltinge handed her the pictures that had fallen out of the trunk and she told him of the Dubinskys and her life in the "tents and the tanks."

II

Before the year was out Jeanne Eagels was playing "Miriam," but she was playing it for the moving pictures.

When "The Crinoline Girl" died and went to the heaven of all successful shows, Jeanne went back to New York; and after some few weeks of hunting a job, discovered that the Thannhouser people were making films in New Rochelle—"forty-five minutes from Broadway."

She went to them with the story of "The Outcast," and made the picture. But it was not Elsie Ferguson's "The Outcast," and it was not called by that name.

Jeanne found the work fascinating because it was different. She had to learn to act without an audience—always a difficult thing for her. She had to act without rehearsing—but she was used to that.

She had to learn to conform to the judgment of the director, even in the way of "registering emotion." Pantomime, she found, was a great art. But she didn't believe in rubbing her hand on her stomach to indicate she was hungry, nor in putting her hands together and placing them under her inclined head to show that she was sleepy.

She believed the directors were stupid and without imagination, and that what they were doing to the story of Miriam was a shame; and she said so. But they didn't listen to her.

"Now cry, Miss Eagels. Your heart is broken. You've found your idol has feet of clay. You are disgusted with him. You know—well—you're broken-hearted. You're ——"

"But I wouldn't cry. Look! I'd stand and look at him like this. See? And my hands would be clenched, like this! And I wouldn't show him my heart was broken. I'd ——"

"Yes, Miss Eagels. Will you cry, please? Bend your head. That's it. You're broken-hearted, and disgusted and —— No! No, don't clench your hands—let them droop. All right. Hold it. Cry! Camera! Lights! Let's go!"

They did queer things in the movies even then. And while it was a joke and a battle for Jeanne, she would not quit. She needed the money, she was making new contacts, creating new opportunities. And she was actually learning something of pantomime.

She was glad to take advantage of Helen Broderick's kind offer now, and she went to live with Helen and Steve. There were only the three of them in the little flat, night after night, but they managed to make each night a glorious occasion. There would be beer and chili con carne or ginger ale and chow mein when Helen and Steve came home after the show.

And there would be talk of shows and show people, and bits of business, and ambitions, and desires.

Jeanne would put on a kimono and hang chrysanthemums over her ears, and while the victrola played

"Madame Butterfly," she would play the part of the deserted Japanese girl, and tears would stream down her cheeks as she called in vain for her white lover.

This was done to show Helen how easily she could cry, how easily any really great actress could cry.

Helen couldn't cry, and can't now. But then she doesn't have to. Jeanne could tap a well of tears on demand, and Helen, in those dead days, resented the fact.

Jeanne was apt to console her with something like this:

"Hell! You want to be an actress. I am an actress. You have something though that I haven't, Helen. You can pull the dead pan and wise-crack better than anyone I know. People will roar at you some day. You are going to be a marvelous comedienne. But be yourself."

Helen and Steve were playing in vaudeville at this time, and Jeanne would go see them whenever she could. Every time she came she brought a huge bouquet of flowers to be handed over the footlights.

Steve and Helen were doing the four-a-day on the Loew circuit. They weren't looking to Broadway then, but were saving for a home in Long Island, like all the rest of their kind. Their act wasn't burning up the North River, and they knew it. But when Jeanne sent the usher down the aisle with American beauty roses for Helen they'd be "all hyped up" for another week of the grind.

There came a time when Steve and Helen believed that Jeanne was avoiding them. It hurt, terribly. They had heard that Jeanne had become very grand, very distant, that she was ritzing all her old friends. They could not understand, but they could not have Jeanne upstage them. It was better not to see her any more, to remember her as the girl she used to be.

And the years rolled by. Jeanne acquired fame, and wore it blatantly. And Steve and Helen left the four-a-day for the two-a-day. They bought their home in Long Island. Jeanne was gone out of their lives, and it was a dreary routine of rehearsing and showing, and making up new patter, and getting up new bits of business. And gradually Helen's "dead-pan wise-crâcks" and Steve's wholesome comedy raised them above the level. One day a wise man saw them and booked them for a great show. Lester Crawford and Helen Broderick! And they were of the élite on Broadway. Oh, they weren't in the electric lights but they were in the money; and critics praised them. And years passed.

And one night they met, by accident, Helen and Jeanne—two women in ermine coats—in the lobby of the theatre where Elsie Ferguson's new play, "Scarlet Pages," was having its premier.

Helen saw Jeanne across the foyer, and didn't know whether to say "Hello," or to pretend she hadn't seen. It would be cruel to say "Hello" and to be snubbed. It would be unbearable to go by and never say a word. Jeanne was with a number of men, but she saw Helen,

and started toward her, through the little knot of men and women who separated them.

She went alone, leaving her friends behind.

"Helen!" she cried, and took her hands.

"Jeanne, dear! It's so good to see you!"

They stood there for a moment, holding hands, trying to wing through the long years that stretched from this bright foyer to the tiny flat in 67th Street, to recapture, if only for a second, something of the happiness, the laughter, the tears, and the dreams they had shared together, each saying to herself, "How changed you are, my friend, how changed."

Jeanne had made the greatest sensation on Broadway in the ten years that had passed, and Helen had worked her way almost to the pinnacle. But they had lost each other, and they had lost youth, and they met now almost as strangers.

"How well you're looking, dear!"

"And you! You're lovely."

Jeanne was lovely, but there was something wistful in her great eyes; and the hands that blazed with jewels, real and false, toyed nervously with the pearls that hung from her throat.

One of her escorts called to her, and she laughed and made a face.

"Don't mind my friends," she whispered. "They're all wet!"

Helen looked at them across Jeanne's shoulder. Indeed, they were "all wet" toadies, sycophants, beggars

in evening dress, the parasites that live upon a star. Helen sighed.

"I must see more of you, Helen. Do call me up soon."

"I will, Jeanne. I do want to see you again. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye!"

Jeanne went back to her friends. "That was Helen Broderick," she said. "It was like old times—meeting her again."

And Helen went to Steve. "I saw Jeanne," she said, "and she didn't ritz me."

Two chorus girls who had given their lives for success—and found it—were happy only in a chance meeting. One was happy because it "was like old times." And the other was happy because "she didn't ritz me."

They did not meet again.

Perhaps both realized that the past was dead, and though forget-me-nots might be blooming on its grave, they were but the flowers of regret.

The past was dead, and the past was all they had in common to link one to the other. Sometimes it is cruel to resurrect the dead.

They did not write. They did not telephone.

Helen wept when she read that Jeanne was dead. But she did not go to Campbell's undertaking rooms. She could not.

She kept remembering the times she and Jeanne had

passed that funeral house, when both were young, and fame was but a name.

"We'll both lie in there sometime," Jeanne would say. And Helen would answer, "You, maybe. But not me. Some cheap Eighth Avenue undertaker will be good enough for me."

Helen sent flowers, and wet them with her tears, recalling the roses Jeanne had brought her when she and Steve were in the four-a-day. And she went on, rehearsing the dead-pan, wise-cracking stuff that was to make her such a hit in "Fifty Million Frenchmen."

III

Jeanne Eagels had finished the moving picture version of "The Outcast" when she learned that Elsie Ferguson was at last tired of the rôle and refusing to go on tour with it.

She hurried to Tom Reilly, the producer, and asked for Elsie's job. Reilly laughed at her.

"You look a little like Elsie," he said. "That is, your nose tilts something like hers. But it takes more than a nose to play 'The Outcast.'"

Jeanne left fighting mad. She wanted that part and she was determined to get it at any cost. Wanting it so gave her an idea.

She found a picture of Elsie in the rôle of "Miriam" and dressed herself exactly as Elsie was dressed. She pulled her hair into a Ferguson roll, leaving the tips

of her ears exposed. She fluted her lips as Elsie did. She walked as she had seen Elsie walk. She talked as she had heard Elsie talk.

And when she had made herself into another Elsie she hurried to the theatre, and, before any of the group in Reilly's office could stop her, she had gone through Elsie's rôle in the first act.

Jeanne played "Miriam" on the road, and made a sensation wherever she appeared. She brought the play back to New York after a great season in the South, but there was no theatre on Broadway for it—meaning the district known to all the world of the theatre as Broadway.

It was played in the Standard Theatre, far uptown, where few of the critics ever ventured. And what critic wanted to see Jeanne Eagels in a part that had been so wonderful when Elsie Ferguson played it?

One newspaperman though, Rennold Wolf, managing editor of the *Morning Telegraph,* the racing, sports, and theatrical paper of New York, did get up that far. And he not only felt that Jeanne was the greatest actress in the world, but also the world's most glorious girl. He began to take friends to see her. He wrote letters to all the big producers in New York, urging them to see Jeanne Eagels in "The Outcast," and to sign her up. She was a star, he insisted, a great star, and any producer would be lucky to get her under contract.

But producers had no confidence in Rennold Wolf,

and they thought he was in love with the girl. They had heard of Eagels. She was a joke all over Broadway, a scatter-brained blonde, who was always laughing and telling everybody how great she was in the tank towns.

Wolf gave Jeanne letters to every important theatrical man in New York, when "The Outcast" closed, and bored them all by phoning at odd intervals to rave about her talents and her beauty.

She was broke, as usual. And in the weeks that followed she came perilously near to starvation. She would not take money from Wolf. She would not accept help from Helen or Steve. She was determined to get a job in New York, and pay her own way. And the weeks went by, and there was no job.

Jeanne went from one to another, showing her letters. Producers and managers read, but without enthusiasm. They looked at Jeanne, and saw nothing but a thin young woman in clothes that were neither new nor of good material. They were unimpressed. Only David Belasco gave her any hope.

Jeanne liked to talk about that first interview with "Mr. David."

Belasco received her in his private room upstairs over the Belasco Theatre. He sat in a great throne chair, Jeanne said, looking more like a bishop than anything else. She started to speak, but he put his finger to his lips as though she had violated the sanctity of a cathedral, and he must rebuke her for it.

With a wave of his hand he indicated a chair, and in reverent silence he studied her. Jeanne was thrilled, and not a little nervous, but she almost burst into laughter at the solemnity of the affair.

Belasco, too, likes to talk about that first meeting.

"She reminded me of nothing in the world but a starved little alley cat," he says, "beautiful—ah, that wonderful golden head and the blue angelic eyes and the sweet mouth, and the tender but firm chin, and the cunning nose!—beautiful, ah yes, but gaunt, starved, sick! She was an alley cat who had been kicked out of doors. She had been pelted, stoned, cursed, shoved out of everybody's way.

"An alley cat and a little girl—a little girl who seemed to have her arm thrust up perpetually as though to ward off the blows she knew would come; a timid, soft, hungry girl. But her eyes were hard, bitter, and shining with ambition, the eyes of a girl who would do anything to be an actress.

"Thousands of girls have come to me in my time, hardened little wretches, shy sweet virgins, girls who would step over the bodies of their dearest friends for a chance to play in a theatre, poor girls, rich girls, daughters of society leaders—but never such a girl as this Jeanne Eagels.

"She was a contradiction, a timid girl who feared no man, a girl who had been whipped by adversity until she cringed, but who faced me with hard ambitious eyes. A girl in shabby clothes, with the air of

a Duse, and the voice of an earl's daughter, and the mien of a tired alley cat.

"I asked her why she wanted to be an actress. She said that she was an actress, and that something in her would never let her be anything else. As she talked I placed her. I had heard of her. Why this, I remembered, was the girl who was always talking about the parts she played in Keokuk or What Cheer or Dubuque. This was the Bernhardt of the sticks, the patsy of New York.

"'Do you mind telling me all about yourself?' I asked. And she answered, 'Sure, why not. I have nothing to hide. I have played in tent shows, in wagon shows, in circuses, in burlesque, in choruses. I have played all the parts an actress can play. I have stayed outside of theatres all night, freezing, soaking wet, trying to get a part to play in New York, trying to see some man who might give me a job as a chorus girl. I have gone hungry and ragged. I have been sick, and unable to go to a doctor. I have fought all kinds of men—and women too—to be an actress in New York.

"'And I still have my ambition—and my virtue.'

"I told her of the three P's—Pluck, Personality, and Perseverance. With the three P's, and a little luck, one may become an actress. I told her that if she worked for me she must say good-bye to love and marriage, for nothing interferes with the career of a woman of the stage so much as love. Love begets jealousy. Jealousy leads to worry, anger, and the destruction of

reason. No woman can act a part when she's thinking 'Now he's in that other woman's arms.' No woman can act when she's trying hard to hold a man and worrying about him.

"'An actress,' I said to her, 'should be as chaste as a nun, as indifferent, and as lonely, and as hard-working, and as sober as a nun, if she would be a success.'

"She told me she was done with love, and that marriage meant nothing to her. I asked her if she drank and she answered, 'Only champagne. The doctor prescribed it for me. But I cannot always buy it. I also take hot gin—to relieve pain. That is also a doctor's prescription.' I realized that. Many women must drink hot gin at times."

Belasco was delighted with Jeanne, believed she had talent, and said he would remember her. At the time he had no work for her. And Jeanne went out to fight hunger and cold again, to walk from agency to agency, and to faint from exhaustion and despair.

Through Wolf she managed to see Joseph Brooks; and Brooks thought enough of her to put her in "The Great Pursuit" a play by C. Haddon Chambers. Marie Tempest was in the cast, Charles Cherry, W. Graham Browne, Phyllis Neilson Terry, and Bruce McRae.

The play opened in the Shubert Theatre, at 44th Street and Broadway. Jeanne was on Broadway at last, and featured next to Marie Tempest. Marie kissed her as the curtain fell on the last act, and de-

clared she was as proud of Jeanne as if the girl had been her own daughter. David Warfield came back stage and gave her a compliment and a kiss.

"You have the most genteel personality of any woman on the stage," he said.

Pluck, Personality, and Perseverance, and a little luck. And the greatest of these is luck.

Jeanne attracted favorable attention from the critics. But the show closed after a few weeks. And Jeanne went home, to see her mother, and to rest.

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VI

TWO men aided Jeanne Eagels in her rise to stardom. One was the forceful and magnetic Willard Mack. The other was the gentle Clifton Webb. One was a tonic to her, refreshing her spirit, reënforcing her ideas as to the grandeur of her work. The other was a consoling, guiding, happy companion.

Broadway says she loved Clifton Webb. Perhaps she did. But Webb was too much like her to attract any deep love. They did not quarrel like lovers, and they were not jealous of each other in all the years of their "platonic love affair." Maybe he kissed her and was kissed, but neither of them disliked the kiss, nor craved it overmuch.

She did not love Willard Mack, but she gave him an admiration that was akin to love.

Bonnie Glass, who became Mrs. Ben Ali Haggin, introduced Jeanne to Clifton and his mother, Mrs. Mabel Webb. Jeanne stumbled—or one might say crashed—into Mack.

Belasco was sick, and Mack had agreed to look over some applicants for parts in the play "Canary Dutch," which he had made out of John Moroso's story, "Alias Santa Claus." He was sitting in Belasco's throne room when Eagels stormed in. He didn't know her. He

had never heard of her. But he liked the way she looked around the room before she seated herself. He knew she had seen everything in the place in the one comprehensive glance, the bronzes, the antiques, the rugs, the lights, the miniature elephants on the desk, and Mack himself.

"Who are you?" she asked.

"Willard Mack. Belasco's sick, and I'm looking over some people."

Mack's first glance was comprehensive, too. Here was a seedy, reedy girl who came looking for a job she needed badly, and she was bold and direct, and not at all awed by the atmosphere or the man who spoke to her, nor aware of the wisdom of placating and flattering him. A gallant soul. Who was she?

"Are you casting this show?" she asked.

"Not exactly. Merely looking 'em over. I'll report to Belasco on those I see. If I like 'em, Belasco may too."

It was not a hint, it was merely a wet finger held up to see if the wind blew from sta'board or from port.

"Then I'm wasting my time with you!" she said.

Ah, not a little wind, a stiff nor'easter.

Mack smiled. Truly a gallant soul. He wanted to do something for her.

"Maybe I can get Belasco to see you."

"What's the use? If he's sick he doesn't want to talk. I'd merely annoy him. And maybe he'd get on my nerves. No, I came to see Belasco and nobody else.

I'm just wasting my time. I'll come back when Belasco is in. Good-bye."

Mack sat back and gazed at her as she breezed out. Then he got up and went across the hall, and talked to one of Belasco's lieutenants.

"One of the greatest girls in the world just blew in looking for a job, and blew out again," he said. "A blonde beaut in a cheap outfit who talked as though she were Ethel Barrymore."

"That must have been Jeanne Eagels."

"She's an actress, boy."

"Oh, yeah?"

"Oh, yeah!"

Jeanne remembered Mack when she saw him again, and he remembered her, though two years had passed. Mack was going up the steep narrow stairway that leads to Belasco and glory when he saw a pair of ankles and legs coming down. He stopped—first in admiration—and then to let the legs go by him.

The legs lengthened into a beautiful girl, and the girl stopped and smiled, and said, "Hello, Mr. Mack."

"Hello, Miss Eagels."

"I'm sorry I was rude to you."

This was one of her rare apologies.

"You weren't rude."

"But I didn't know then who you were."

She had been quite chagrined when she learned that Mack was a great playwright and a fine actor.

A few days later Mack strolled into Keene's Chop

House for lunch, and saw Jeanne Eagels. She crooked her finger and smiled, and he sat down beside her. She explained she had only a minute to eat. She was rehearsing "Daddies," and must hurry back, but they sat talking for hours.

Mack did most of the talking.

"I was playing in a show in San Francisco," he said, "when Jack London came into my dressing room. He had a pretty fine edge on. He never got drunk, but he was never sober. He sat on my trunk, watching me smearing the grease paint on my face.

"'You can be damned proud of being an actor,' he said. 'You can get a swelled head about it, and it's all right with me. Acting is a cultivated art. You've got to work all the time to be a real actor. It's the hardest work there is, acting. And a good actor has the right to be proud of himself.

"'But damn you if you're ever proud of anything you write! Writing is a gift of God. No one can acquire it. No matter how hard you work you never can be a writer unless you have the gift.'"

Mack talked of famous people he knew, and now and then Jeanne piped up with, "I know him," or "Yes, she's grand."

"You couldn't know him," Mack would protest. "You're too young."

"Yes? But I was an actress when I was a baby, and have been ever since."

They talked of Broadway and of the sticks, of the

tent shows and the opera, and of actors and playwrights and stage managers and producers. They talked of themselves.

"Al Woods," Mack said. "A great man. A fine, keen fellow. I wrote a play for him once, and disappeared with the last act half-finished and rehearsals called for Monday morning. When I woke up I was on a steamer bound for Havana. I was gone three weeks, and when I came back I went to Woods and gave him the last half of the third act.

"Al bared his heart to me, and I took it all patiently, and waited until he had exhausted all his words. Then I got up, and walked toward him.

"'Al,' I said, 'if you examine my record you'll find I haven't killed a producer in three years. Don't you think it about time I did something about it?'

"Woods broke into a laugh, and put his arm around my shoulders. 'You Irish son of a such and such,' he said, 'how can I be mad at you?'"

"God!" said Jeanne. "If I could only handle them like that!"

Mack told of his life in the South Seas, and predicted that sometime someone would write a great play of the South Sea Islands—and warned Jeanne not to throw away the chance of playing in it, if it came her way. This was years before Maugham wrote "Sadie Thompson," and Jack Colton made it into "Rain."

Jeanne told of her life in the corn belt.

"Acting," she said, "should be like the army. A

private becomes a corporal, because of his ability. A corporal becomes a sergeant, if he's a good corporal, and after a while, if he continues to improve, he moves up the ranks. And when he's a colonel, he's a colonel —by God, because he is a colonel!—and nobody can keep him from being one.

"It should be. But it isn't. There is no substitute for ability. Yet how many actors and actresses are starred, not because of ability, but for any other reason you care to name? Publicity makes most of them—and how I hate to see a ham get publicity! Some of course sell themselves—but we needn't go into that."

They didn't realize they had spent so much time, until Jeanne arrived at the theatre, and the stage manager pulled out his watch and looked at it significantly.

Jeanne smiled a farewell to Mack, and then she looked at the stage manager. A mask of fury had settled on her face. He had poisoned her whole day.

II

Jeanne saw Willard Mack occasionally—she hunted him up whenever she was despondent, and in need of his dynamic personality. But she was constantly with Clifton and Mabel Webb.

The Webbs' home, a New York apartment, was an informal Lambs' Club where everybody came, artists like George Bellows who has a whole room given to his work in the Metropolitan Museum, actors, writers,

movie stars, opera singers, and musicians. Here one might meet in one afternoon or evening, Monta Bell, Rudolph Valentino, Marilyn Miller, Gertrude Lawrence, Beatrice Lillie, Geraldine Farrar, Scotti, Jeritza, Ponselle,—anybody who was anybody.

Jeanne and Clifton became known to Broadway, and to each other, as "the girl friend" and "the boy friend." Webb, when Jeanne first knew him, was only a dancer, but he had ambitions. He and Jeanne once saw Jack Barrymore; and Clifton came away from the theatre a new person.

He turned on Jeanne, something almost like anger in his eyes. He lifted his hand as Barrymore had done, and in Barrymore's most dramatic tone he said what Barrymore had said—"Christ!"

"I can do that Christ stuff as well as Barrymore," he admitted.

Jeanne burst into laughter.

"Clifton, you're immense," she cried. "Do it again!" And at times when Clifton seemed vague and absent-minded and distressed, Jeanne would ask, "Are you in one of your 'Christ' moods again?"

Nobody was more delighted than Jeanne when Webb worked himself up to the part he later played in "The Little Show."

She called up Sam Harris after she saw him in rehearsal.

"What do you think of my boy friend now?" she asked, and without waiting for an answer, she rushed

on. "I told you he could be a great attraction if you'd give him the chance. He's as good on the dramatic stuff, and the comedy, as he is in his dancing."

Webb was known as the best-dressed man on Broadway, and the man who introduced Rudolph Valentino to his tailor.

So Jeanne, who took a great delight in being told she looked like Webb, decided she must be Broadway's best-dressed woman. She began buying clothes, and discovered she had the faculty of wearing the oddest things and making them look chic. She didn't plan a wardrobe. She bought whatever she thought she ought to have.

When it was cold, and there was ice in the park, she and Clifton would buy skating costumes. And they might, or might not, go skating. Jeanne bought a riding habit so she could go for a canter in Central Park every morning with Webb. She rode but once.

They went everywhere together, and pretended they were brother and sister. When the critics said that she looked "like an excited and glorified Clifton Webb in crinoline" she laughed for days.

Mabel helped Jeanne to pick out her clothes, and to furnish her rooms. Jeanne had taken a two-room walk-up-apartment at 18 East 58th Street, at a very modest rental; but she was surrounded by equipment and attendants that would embarrass a millionaire—a maid, a cook, a Jap chauffeur—and great piles of

draperies, screens, and furniture. She bought most of it "on time."

Like Julian Eltinge, Mabel tried to mould Jeanne's conduct toward people she wanted to meet. Jeanne seldom took her advice.

"Who's coming to-night, Mabel?" she would ask. "And how shall I act? Shall I be water? Shall I be milk? Or shall I be champagne?"

"Just be yourself," Mabel usually answered.

When Jeanne was expected to be wild and exciting and full of fun, she would be prim and proper, a bit reserved, dignified. She would clothe herself in her broadest English accent, and her most sedate manners. And when the guests had gone, she would roll on the floor and shout, "Oh, Lord! Didn't I fool them? Didn't I put on an act?"

There was always something to laugh about in the Webbs' home—the Brooklyn admirer who sent $300 worth of American beauty roses to the theatre when Jeanne couldn't buy herself a cup of coffee in Childs' —the horse another man sent her, enclosed in a van— and Jeanne unable to buy oats even for a wooden horse —the story of Ina Claire who came to call on Mabel one Monday morning and was put to bed because Mabel thought Ina was to play a matinée that afternoon—the nights Jeanne and Mabel would be routed out of bed by a telephone call, to dress hurriedly and rush to some party in Spuyten Duyvil, or Westchester, or Long Island—the hooking and buttoning in the

taxicab and the train—the night Mabel saw Jeanne sitting in a box at the opera with three women she felt she ought to know, but couldn't identify. They turned out to be Jeanne's secretary, maid, and cook. Jeanne had dressed them in some of her evening gowns, and given them her jewels to wear, "because Sam Harris wants me to be seen with women."

The favorite laugh went back to the night the Webbs invited Jeanne to a party given for a number of Metropolitan Opera stars. Jeanne didn't want to go, because she knew nothing of music and feared she might be at a disadvantage.

"They'll think I'm just an ignorant little fool," she said. "I won't go."

Clif and Mabel pleaded with her, and she gave in, reluctantly. She arrived at midnight, in a simple white dress. After she had been introduced to all the guests, she went to the piano where Marazoni, the conductor of the opera, was playing "Sheherazade." She turned the pages for him, and made not a single mistake. The singers were impressed.

"I watched Marazoni's eyes," Jeanne explained when she was alone with Mabel. "Thus, I knew exactly when to turn. Aren't I clever?"

A few weeks before she died Jeanne spent a weekend with Mabel in the Webbs' Long Island home. Mabel was ill, and Jeanne must make her comfortable. She rubbed Mabel's face and hands with a soothing and "very special" preparation.

"This stuff is frightfully expensive," Jeanne said, seriously. "I don't think you can buy it in this country. I got it from my friend, Queen Marie, when I met her in Paris. She made me promise never to tell anyone about it, or to use it on anyone but myself. But if it is going to make you feel better, dear, what's a promise to a queen? It's really magic. It'll make you young. I'm going to leave some here for you when I go. Don't thank me. I can't bear it. It's nothing. But I wouldn't give it to anyone else in the world."

After Jeanne left Mabel found the stuff could be bought in any drug store for thirty-nine cents a bottle.

Mabel likes to remember Jeanne as she was that day, a tired little girl in orchid robe and mules, lying on an orchid chaise longue, planning for a theatre party at the Palace, where Beatrice Lillie was head-lining.

Jeanne intended to have Clif sitting beside her; and when Bee requested the audience to name any song and she would sing it, Clif was to rise and demand a song Jeanne was sure Bee never had heard.

The seats were bought, the party was arranged, but at the last moment, Clif decided not to go through with it. It was too hot a day, and he didn't feel like stirring from his cool veranda, especially to go into New York.

Jeanne phoned early in the morning to make sure Clif and Mabel would come to the matinée, and when Clif declined, Jeanne said in a hurt and indignant voice:

"Very well then, good-bye!"

It was the last good-bye.

Webb had a room in the Music Box, one flight up from the lobby, and near Sam Harris' office. There he dressed before the show, thence he emerged, thither he repaired between acts and after the last curtain. And there along about 8: 20 o'clock most every evening except Sunday, one might find Jeanne Eagels. She had been barred by Equity, but she took a sort of poignant pleasure in visiting the dressing rooms of her friends.

Webb's room appealed to her especially, and she wanted it for her own—when she moved into the theatre in the wonderful new play that was to put her back on Broadway after Equity's ban expired.

"But this is inconvenient," she complained. "You've got to walk down all these stairs, and then down an aisle and back stage before you can tread the boards and speak your little piece. When this room is mine—and it will be mine unless you stay here forever, damn you—I'm going to have a chute put in, so that when I'm dressed I can slide right down onto the stage."

Mabel Webb came into this dressing room looking for Jeanne at 8: 20 o'clock one Thursday night, and was surprised to find Jeanne wasn't there.

"Maybe she's really angry at Cliff," Mabel thought. "Maybe she'll never come here again." It was a few minutes after Jeanne had died in a doctor's office, half a mile away.

III

George Arliss, far from Broadway, was rehearsing "The Professor's Love Story," a play by J. M. Barrie, and he wanted a girl to play the part of "Lucy White."

He wanted a woman of ripe experience, but one who had been dieting—for he had to carry her across the stage in his arms. Arliss was not an athlete, and while he might be able to carry one hundred and thirty pounds of feminine loveliness, he didn't intend to do it night after night, and twice on matinée days. And he expected the play would have a long run. No man minds carrying a pretty girl twenty feet or so—when he has to do it only once. The thrill begins to wane the second time, especially if the girl is a healthy eater.

The great actor could find plenty of women capable of playing the part, but they were over-developed. And he found plenty of women light enough to carry, but incapable of acting.

He asked an agent in New York for a light actress, and was offered a buxom blonde. He demanded one of slight build, and found she was also of slight talent.

He was in despair until he received a wire from a girl named Eagels, which said that Belasco had advised her to get in touch with Mr. Arliss, and assured Mr. Arliss that Miss Eagels could play any part he had in mind.

"How much do you weigh?" Arliss asked in his return wire.

"What do you want me to weigh?" Jeanne telegraphed, and took the first train she could get.

Jeanne had come back from her vacation in Kansas City, somewhat improved in appearance, wearing new clothes, and exhibiting a new assurance. She had tasted her first triumph on Broadway in "The Great Pursuit," and was eager for new glory.

"Arliss is a wonderful actor," Belasco told her. "He can do much to make you a great actress. You are a lucky girl to have this chance, Miss Jeannie. Good-bye—and success."

Jeanne weighed but 117 pounds, and Arliss saw immediately that she had that spark needed to make an actress. She was ideal for the part. And yet—and yet—she wouldn't do a thing he told her to do. She argued with him. She defied him. She believed her ideas were better than his, and insisted on proving her belief.

Arliss sighed, and ran his hands through his hair, and told her she was impossible. She had better go back to New York. And for the first time Jeanne agreed with him.

"He's too methodical," she complained, when she returned to Belasco's office. "The man is set in his ways, and will not listen to reason. I tried and tried to tell him exactly how my part should be played. But he was stubborn. He wanted his own way."

Belasco was astonished, and somewhat amused, at the vision of this Bernhardt of the sticks attempting to

make the distinguished actor conform to her ideas. He scolded Jeanne.

"Miss Jeannie," he said, "you are but a child." Jeanne was over twenty-six at the time, but she looked sixteen. "And Arliss is one of the best actors of the London or the New York stage, with years and years of experience behind him. You should not quarrel with him. Indeed you should be grateful for all the advice and all the criticism he is willing to give you.

"Another thing. A novice, such as you, must do what her director tells her, if she would continue to be an actress. Possibly the director is wrong and you are right; but do what he tells you, and then if it is still wrong, you may suggest that he let you do it your way. Stage directors are usually reasonable people, and most of them are open to suggestions. But no director will, or should, tolerate insubordination. You have lost a wonderful opportunity, and I'm sorry for you. But I'll look around and see if there isn't something else I can get you."

But Jeanne had lost nothing. In a few days, Arliss, tired of trying to find a girl as light, and as fiery as Jeanne Eagels, sent her a wire asking her to come back to him.

Arliss found her humble now, chastened, almost slavish in her obedience, determined to please. Jeanne found Arliss tolerant, patient, and actually—and surprisingly—helpful to her. Before rehearsals had ended she realized that this man was the greatest actor

she had ever known—and she reverenced him as much as she had worshipped Eva Lang.

There were nights when she went to sleep saying "Arliss! Arliss! Arliss!" There were days when her eyes glowed from watching him, observing why and how he made each gesture, why and how he performed every bit of business, listening to the tone of his voice that was sometimes more eloquent than the words he uttered.

She was not in love with him; but she would have made almost any sacrifice to hear him say, "You are doing splendidly, Miss Eagels."

The play opened in New York at the Knickerbocker Theater late in the February of 1917, and ran for months. It made Jeanne Eagels a Broadway success, an end "The Great Pursuit" had failed to achieve. An actress is only as good as the character she portrays. She had been good in "The Great Pursuit" but the play failed. She had been magnificent in "The Outcast"—but she had not played "on Broadway" in that drama.

"The Professor's Love Story" not only established Jeanne Eagels as a fine dramatic actress, but it gave her the first real money she had ever earned.

And the fact that she was living in New York gave her the opportunity of returning to the moving picture studio in New Rochelle. Her first picture, the one made from the stage version of "The Outcast" had given the Thannhouser people a nice profit on their

investment; and they were eager to have Jeanne make them other pictures, and other profits.

It meant long hours and hard work, but Jeanne was willing to spend her time and her energy. She took over the house in Mamaroneck that had been owned by the unfortunate Kay Laurell, and is now the property of the fortunate Ethel Barrymore. She rose early in the morning, motored into New Rochelle, worked all day with Harold Lockwood or Montague Love or Earle Fox, making such pictures as "The World and the Woman," "Fires of Youth," "Under False Colors," "The Sign of the Cross," "The Bride of the Sea," and then drove into New York to give an evening performance of "The Professor's Love Story." She worked only half a day at the studio when she had to give a matinée.

Fourteen hours a day she worked, every day but Sunday, month after month. And she would arrive at her home in Mamaroneck too tired to sleep.

Her friends tried to make her quit. She would not. They told her the Mamaroneck house was unlucky. It brought bad luck to Kay Laurell. It would jinx her life. She laughed.

It is a beautiful house overlooking Long Island Sound. It is embraced by wonderful lawns. It has trees and gardens. It is a restful place. Kay Laurell bought it when she was at the height of her fame.

Kay was a Pennsylvania mining town beauty. She came to Broadway from a telephone exchange in Erie.

She posed for artists. She posed in the nude in Ziegfeld shows. She fell in love with Edgar Selwynn. She went abroad on a holiday, and Selwynn heard gossip about her. He cabled her. Kay replied in jest, "You don't know the half of it." She thought surely Selwynn was joking—but she learned too late that he was in earnest. He had not understood her reply so lightly meant, and the engagement was broken. She tried to commit suicide, but she recovered, to marry Winfield Sheehan, and to find he did not love her and she did not love him. She studied dramatic art and became the star of "Whispering Wires." She died alone in a London hotel after months of illness.

It was in this house that Jeanne first learned of sedatives—to put her tired nerves to sleep—and stimulants—to make her tired body fresh and invigorated, and her weary mind bright and eager.

She seldom got home before 1 o'clock in the morning. She would be physically and mentally exhausted—for nothing so taxes the body as emotion, and Jeanne worked with emotions day and night.

She tried to tire herself further, that she might sleep, only to find herself pacing the floor and waiting for the dawn that would send her back to work. She did not drink—save for her ailments—a sip or two of champagne, a swallow of heated gin. She did not want to drink. She did not like to drink. Drink made her dizzy, made her sick. It would not make her sleep.

One Sunday when there was no work to be done,

Jeanne phoned Mabel Webb, and begged her to come at once.

"Don't wait for the train," she pleaded. "Get into a taxi and tell the driver to hurry. Get here as soon as you can. I need you. I think I'm going crazy."

"But darling," Mabel protested, "a taxi will cost a lot of money."

Jeanne gave a cry of impatience.

"I don't care what it costs. I'll pay it. You must come. You must come now. I tell you I'm going mad."

Mabel took the taxi, and found Jeanne waiting for her on the lawn. The bill was $18. Jeanne gave the driver a $20 bill, and hurried into the house.

"I had to see you," she said. "You must do something for me. I haven't slept for nights. My arm hurts. My head hurts. Every nerve in my body aches. If I could bring myself to suicide I think I would be happy."

"Have you a doctor?" Mabel asked.

"Of course. Of course. He's coming. But I wanted you too. I had to have you. You're so soothing, so comforting."

Even as she spoke the doctor rang the bell. He was small and dark and his eyes were weird and fierce.

He opened his satchel, took out a bottle, poured a dose, mixed it in a glass.

"Drink this," he said. He spoke in a harsh brusque voice.

Jeanne swallowed the potion.

"Now lie down on the couch."

The doctor made mystic passes over her face with his large queer hands, and then began to rub her temples.

"Nerves, relax," he said. "Nerves, you are relaxing. Nerves, you will sleep. Nerves, you are asleep. Nerves, you will sleep until morning."

He arose abruptly and spoke to Mrs. Webb.

"Take her clothes off and cover her, and leave her alone," he said. "She'll sleep until morning."

Jeanne slept until morning, and woke refreshed, sparkling, miraculously well. It was the beginning of the end—but she couldn't know that then.

Years later Jeanne sent to this doctor one of her men friends who had drunk himself to the point where he saw blue and pink monkeys climbing into his window.

The doctor mixed him a drink. The man felt calm and blissful, and sensed, dimly, the brusque doctor bending over him and whispering, "Nerves, relax. Nerves, you are relaxed."

He woke suddenly to find himself lying on a couch in the doctor's office and looking at a great hairy ape on the window sill. He leaped from the couch, pressed all the buttons on the doctor's desk, and shouted. Nurses came rushing in through several doors.

"For God's sake," he cried, "tell me do I see what I think I see?"

One of the nurses chided him for waking, and ex-

plained that what he saw was only an ape, the doctor's pet.

Jeanne's friend left the place at once. He did not go back, though he wanted to—to drink once more that magic liquid the doctor had mixed for him.

When Jeanne Eagels died, James R. Quirk of Photoplay Magazine, wrote an editorial, part of which is quoted here:

"Star! Success! Fame! Fortune!

"Behind that stage front, years of pain and suffering with tuberculosis and neuritis of the optic nerves. Struggle from tent shows to Belasco star. Worry. The merciless battle to keep alive and keep going. Unhappiness. Envy. Gossip.

"Pitiless driving of harassed soul and broken, pain-racked body. Making fortunes and giving them away. Hemorrhages. The show must go on. Stimulants to drive the poor helpless body. Sedatives to deaden the blinding agony.

"Temperament, they called it.

"Courage, I call it.

"The show must go on."

The show went on.

When "The Professor's Love Story" began to play to diminishing crowds, Arliss called rehearsals for a new play, "Alexander Hamilton," which he had helped to write. Jeanne left the movies for rehearsals —but still she worked night and day.

She played the part of Maria Reynolds, an obvious

little hussy, but a bewitching one, who demurely vamps the distinguished Secretary of the Treasury. The play opened in September, and many of the critics said that Jeanne "stole the show" from the famous Arliss.

Jeanne, having no need now to live near the New Rochelle studios, got rid of her Mamaroneck house, and rented an apartment in New York. And again she began to frequent the flat in 67th Street where Steve and Helen Crawford lived.

VII

A HUNDRED times or more Jeanne Eagels said to Helen Broderick, "I wish Belasco would come and take a look at me."

Four times, while she was playing in "Alexander Hamilton," she saw Belasco "out in front," and was but too willing to believe the master had come to see how good she was.

But Helen, ever the chorus girl pal, disillusioned her.

"Don't be silly. He's watching Arliss."

But Helen was wrong. Belasco sent for Jeanne.

"I saw you in 'Hamilton,' Miss Jeannie," he said, "and I think that with a little more training you will become a very good actress. Not a star. Stars aren't made overnight.

"I'm going to put you in a play. I'm going to feature you. It's a four act play by John L. Hobble, and it's called 'Daddies.' I'm going to sacrifice your youth and your beauty—but only in the first act, and you'll have to be very clever to make up for this sacrifice."

He beamed upon the excited girl.

"You are a little immigrant girl. You come on the stage quite seasick from your long journey from England, and I'm going to build you a staircase to climb."

Jeanne watched Belasco's hands, and saw a girl climbing up those stairs, as though she were climbing the companion on a pitching ship. She felt the throb of engines. She felt herself reeling, clinging to the companion rail while the ship fell into a deep pit and then began to climb a hill.

"You are the daughter of a dead British officer. One of the five bachelors in New York who have sworn never to marry, has agreed to adopt you, poor little war orphan, not knowing you are grown up. Can you see the consternation of these bachelors when you come reeling onto the stage?"

Again his hands made pictures for Jeanne to visualize.

Jeanne was elated, but did not let Belasco see it. She asked about the cast, the stage director, the date set for rehearsals, thanked "Mr. David" prettily, walked sedately down the steps; and, once out of sight, danced into the street.

She was going to be a Belasco star!

It was a long way from Morris Dubinsky and the sweltering corn fields to Belasco and Broadway—but she regretted no inch nor hour of it.

Yet even now she risked her future and the loss of all she had won, to have her own way. Not even Belasco might tell her what to do or how to do it. Belasco smiled to himself, and waited. He had his own ways of getting what he wanted.

He sat back in his seat, in the dark and empty

theatre, and watched rehearsals, smoking a cigar, taking mental notes.

"Don't stamp your foot, Miss Eagels," the stage director would say.

"Why not? Of course I'll stamp my foot. I would stamp my foot in just this way in this situation. It's the only thing to do."

"Yes? But try it without stamping your foot. Now let's take this scene over. And remember, don't stamp your foot."

But Jeanne would stamp her foot; and it might be hours later before Belasco would make any comment on her quarrel with his stage director.

"Miss Jeannie, I thought you were good in that scene, but do you think you ought to stamp your foot? I don't know. Maybe you're right. Of course it's effective—in a way. But then every woman in the world is different; and should be played in a different way. It takes a real actress to portray all kinds of women.

"I know women who would stamp their pretty feet, just as you did. I know women who would merely stand and look—but in that look there would be the stamping of a thousand feet. I know others who would show their defiance merely with a lift of the head and a gesture of the hand—and be superb!

"Here is a little problem for you, Miss Jeannie. Your father lies dead before you. He has been murdered. You walk into the room and discover his body.

Will you scream? Will you weep? Will you get down on your knees and pray? Will you cry out for vengeance on the murderer? Or will you merely stand helpless, frozen, and inarticulate, and look at the horrible sight?

"It seems to me the last woman is the most dramatic spectacle. She cannot talk. She cannot weep. She can but stand and look, and we know that unless she cries she must go mad with horror and despair."

At the next rehearsal Jeanne would not stamp her foot. She would merely "register defiance" as she had been taught in the despised moving picture plays, and the stage director would cry, "Great! That's it! I knew you could do it, Miss Eagels."

Belasco, sitting back in the audience, would grin slyly to himself and light a fresh cigar.

He saw that Jeanne not only adopted his suggestions, but bettered them. He saw, too, that little by little she warped the part into the shape she wanted it, pulled it, patted it, made it fit her. She was not playing the part, she was making it over to suit her personality, and making it better than it had been.

As rehearsals drew near to the first night, Jeanne told Belasco that she wanted her mother present at the premier.

"By all means," Belasco agreed, smiling benignly. "I like my leading ladies to have mothers. It gives them dignity. Send for her, Miss Jeannie, and I'll see she has the best seat in the house."

Most of the big stars, especially those in the movies, have mothers always hovering about them, shielding them from harm, stepping between them and the uncouth world, lending them the air of dignity Belasco thought essential to his actresses.

Some of these mothers are old, placid, and genuine. Some are bought and paid for. These latter may be of any nationality and any age. The real mothers are often the worst obstacles in their daughters' paths. They are more ambitious and more meddlesome and important than any young girl could be, and they demand more for their daughters than is their daughters' due. Some demand everything the daughter makes. Scratch a stage mama and you find a frustrated actress nine times out of ten. The paid mothers, rented only for background, are often helpful.

Mrs. Julia Eagles wasn't the stage-mother type at all. While she adored Jeanne she did not interfere with her, and she adored her other children, too. She came to see Jeanne whenever she could, as she visited Edna and Helen at every opportunity. She had no more intention of regulating Jeanne's career than she had of running Edna's domestic life.

She was more concerned with Jeanne's happiness and comfort than with her ambitions. Jeanne—"Gee-Gee"—was the shining light of the family, but at the same time she was only one of Julie's girls.

Some years ago it was reported that Helen Eagles was engaged to an English nobleman. A newspaper

man, unable to find Helen, called her mother on the phone and asked if the report was true.

"I don't know anything about it," Mrs. Eagles said. "But it's nothing new to have a nobleman in the family. My daughter Edna is married to a prince."

"A prince!" The reporter was impressed. "I didn't know that. Has it ever been printed? Won't you tell me about him?"

"Of course I will. His name's Bill Ackerley and he's an engineer on the Santa Fe Railroad."

Mrs. Eagles, like all Irish women, likes a broad joke, a hearty laugh, and a big family.

Would it be so strange, if, looking down at the dead face of the great actress, she wished her girl had never had any talent, wished perhaps that there had been another prince in the family?

II

Mrs. Eagles came to New York a few days before the opening of "Daddies," to find her girl frail and ill, and sadly in need of an operation for sinus trouble.

Jeanne fainted frequently during rehearsals, but her indomitable spirit drove her on, and would not let her rest. She was ever in pain.

Sometime before she died, she said to Mabel Webb, "I cannot remember the day when I haven't suffered."

She would fall on the stage. Members of the company would carry her to her dressing room, and give

her such treatments as they could, pending the arrival of a doctor. At times Belasco had a doctor waiting all day—and all night too, for that matter—to minister to her at need.

Mrs. Eagles consulted a physician, and had him make an examination of her daughter—the old fear of consumption clutching at her heart. An immediate operation was advised, but Jeanne laughed at the idea. That would be impossible, she said. They were going to open in a few days.

And it was not until sometime after she had made a tremendous hit in the show that she gave way to her mother's fear, and the doctor's insistence, and submitted to the knife. She was operated on in the morning, and played her rôle that night.

The house was packed with the usual "Broadway First Night" crowd, on the evening in 1918 that "Daddies" was given its premier. The crowd came to see the latest "Belasco offering," and left raving about the latest "Belasco find." They began to laugh as soon as the seasick little girl staggered onto the stage. They roared as she climbed the steps. Everybody who had ever been seasick, or had ever seen a seasick person, was overcome with appreciation and delight.

When Jeanne disappeared into her room at the top of the steps, the audience clapped and clapped and yelled and shouted until she reappeared.

For the first time in many years on Broadway, an actress had stopped the show before it had well begun.

Jeanne had fought not only her sick and tormented body for this night of glory; but she had also fought a very important person in the Belasco organization.

This man was years older than the young actress. He was rich and powerful, and experienced in the ways of women, and he thought this ambitious girl would be an easy conquest.

He began by promising her stardom. He ended with pleading and with threats. She laughed at his pleas. She ignored his threats. She read his love letters to her friends, and let them "listen in" when he phoned.

Shortly before the show opened the lovesick gentleman sought to entrap the girl who still boasted of her virtue. He had a room close to Belasco's, and he summoned Jeanne to him there—first giving sly winks to his familiars and letting them know that Jeanne was his for the taking.

Some of the cast saw Jeanne go up the stairs, and felt shame. Others chuckled in unholy glee, for Eagels was unpopular and aloof. She had snubbed some and ignored others—and now that she was going to humiliation and disgrace, "it served her right."

When Jeanne entered the room, Belasco's lieutenant closed the door, and tried to take her in his arms. She eluded him, and laughed at him. She called him bitter names.

He told her of his great love for her, and Jeanne answered with phrases she had learned from the can-

Wide World Photo

David Belasco, Dean of New York Theatrical Producers, who gave Jeanne Eagels her first important Broadway engagement in DADDIES

vas men on nights when the tent shook in the wind and the rain fell in torrents and there was need to drive the tent stakes farther into the solid soil of Oklahoma.

The old man staggered back, and resorted to the trick that had succeeded hundreds of times with girls as virtuous as Jeanne, but neither so intelligent, nor so angry.

He put his hands quickly to his breast, pretending he had suffered a sudden heart attack. He sank to the floor, moaning that his great love was his death. It was the cue for the hard little rebel to fall on her knees and weep and beg him to live. It was the cue to soften and surrender. But Jeanne followed no cues. She stepped over the writhing body, opened the door, and turned to laugh at the man still moaning and writhing on the floor.

As soon as she had disappeared the outwitted lieutenant got to his feet and rearranged the room. He ran his hands through his hair, tore open his shirt at the neck, and summoned his friends. He met them with a diabolical grin, and a jovial man-to-man wink. But his plot didn't carry, for Jeanne stood in the doorway, smiling sweetly, as if no hurricane had passed over her.

"Now tell these gentlemen exactly what happened," she said. "And put the room in order, as it was when I left."

The great man explained as best he could that he had not kissed Jeanne, and that if he had tried to make

it appear that such was the case, he was but playing a scurvy joke—and he was sorry.

During the third act on the first night of "Daddies," Belasco stood in the wings, his indispensable adjutant at his side. He was made up, expecting that after the first curtain call, Jeanne would lead him by the hand to the center of the stage and present him to the audience.

This was always done on the first night of a new Belasco play. It was an essential part of the Belasco ritual. It was showmanship. It was drama, it was a public acknowledgment on the part of the actress of all that she owed to the great master of the drama.

Jeanne saw Belasco standing there, and knew what she was supposed to do. But because of the man at Belasco's elbow, she determined not to do it. She took as many bows as she earned and never once glanced in Belasco's direction. She went off-stage on the other side of the house. And Belasco remained where he was, stunned to think that any actress should dare to ignore him, especially this upstart from the sticks whom he had fostered. He went to Jeanne's dressing room, all but apoplectic in his wrath.

Jeanne looked at him, and smiled.

"I know what you're going to say, Mr. David. But don't say it now. I'll explain it later. I'm busy now, and a little nervous, and quite sick. I'm afraid I'm going to faint any minute."

Belasco left her alone. She fainted when the cur-

tain had fallen on the last act, and she had taken her last bow. She had to be carried to the cab that took her home. Most every night thereafter she fainted—but not until the show was done. Physicians and nurses were kept back-stage; and they were needed often. Yet, no matter how much Jeanne suffered during the play, she never faltered in her lines, nor collapsed upon the stage.

The emotions she portrayed were stronger than her body. The actress was ever more real to her than the woman. The woman might feel faint, might know terrible pain—but the actress was well, vital, dominant, above all frailties of the flesh. From the time the curtain went up until the moment it fell Jeanne Eagels was merely an actress who could not be hurt unless the rôle demanded it. When the show was over she was a woman doubly hurt because the actress's emotions not only failed to buoy her up, but left her a little weaker than she was.

Often when audiences were still discussing the spell of the actress, the woman was riding to her home in an ambulance.

A little row of bottles might be thanked for keeping the woman and the actress in one body—a little row of bottles she obtained in her Mamaroneck "unlucky" home.

She played "Daddies" every night until she could stand no more. The sickness and the pain, and the hard drudgery of rehearsals were nothing to her. She

was used to that. It was the importunities, the tricks, and the constant love-making of Belasco's man that made her quit.

She blew up at a rehearsal, with all the company present.

"You can all go to hell," she cried. "I'm through with the show. I'm through with all of you. I will not be a prostitute to be a star. I don't have to be."

Belasco saw her leave with sorrow—and perhaps with a little relief as well. She had made a great success. She was a warm and devoted friend. But she was tempestuous, volcanic, destructful. She had all but disrupted his organization. She had made enemies of almost all his cast. Broadway was seething with malicious rumors about her.

"Good-bye, Miss Jeannie," he said. "And good luck to you. Some day, perhaps, you will be a star, a great star. I sincerely hope so. You are still under contract to me; but if you get an offer from some other man, you may say I will release you."

"I'll always remember Jeanne Eagels as a splendid comrade," Belasco said when Ward Morehouse, dramatic critic of the *Sun,* interviewed him on Jeanne's death, "as a person who was good and generous to her friends, and as one who could not overcome a temperament that was no fault of hers."

He was glad to know that, in her home at Ossining, Jeanne had two pictures of him, prominently displayed.

Jeanne exhibited no sorrow when she left; and she

took no consolation in Belasco's hope that she would be a star. She never quite forgave Mr. David for not realizing that she was a star—and the greatest star in the world.

III

Jeanne Eagels was free again, and broke, and pursued by creditors: but she was sanguine. She had made a tremendous success in "Daddies." The critics had said many nice things about her. Great people of the theatre had complimented her, and predicted a rosy future for her. Producers had asked her to come and see them, if she ever left Belasco.

Now that she was free, she would become a star. She would call on those producers who had praised her. They would be glad to see her. They would be eager to give her everything she asked. Or so she thought.

But Jeanne Eagels free was only Jeanne Eagels out of a job, an actress looking for work. She was no longer the "patsy of New York." Managers knew her capabilities—but they also knew her temper, or her temperament. And they knew, too, that there were rôles she could not, or would not play. She was a strange creature who must have a part that suited her, who could act but couldn't rehearse, who fought stage directors, who hated her fellow players. They wanted her—but they had no plays to suit her.

It was to be years before she tasted the sweetness—and the bitterness—of stardom. She was to appear in many plays before Sam Harris gave her "Rain." She was to go hungry again, to look wistfully at pretty frocks she could not buy. She was to borrow, to pawn, to walk from agency to agency looking for work.

But she had her independence and her self-respect when she walked out of Belasco's theatre. And she had confidence in herself, and hope. She was a little over twenty-eight years old—but what of that? Hadn't she been a leading lady at fifteen? Or was it twelve? Sometimes she herself forgot, she had told the story of her early days so many times.

Now and then she got a part and played it for a while. Now and then the play was a failure, now and then it ran for months and the critics said she was good, or excellent, or capable, or fine. An actress is only as good as her rôle. "A Young Man's Fancy" died in a few weeks. "The Wonderful Thing" drew crowds for many months.

"A Young Man's Fancy," written by John T. McIntyre, and produced in 1919, concerned the plight of a chap who fell in love with a wax model in the window of a department store. He finds the model was made in the image and likeness of one of the buyers, the blonde Mary Darling. And he marries her. Jeanne was Mary.

"The Wonderful Thing" was a comedy by Lillian Trimble Bradlay, a Brooklyn girl, and was based on a

story by Forrest Halsey. George Broadhurst produced it in 1920. Gordon Ash, an English importation, was the leading man. It was his first, and his last, American appearance. Philip Dunning, now known as a playwright, was in the cast. Jeanne played the part of Jacqueline Laurentine, the daughter of an English pork packer, who had been reared in a convent in France. The wonderful thing, of course, is love.

It was while she was rehearsing this play that she found a lover and a friend.

The first was Thomas L. Chadbourne, a well-known New York corporation lawyer. The second was Madame Maria Savage, who had for long years worked with the Metropolitan Opera Company, and who taught French.

One broke Jeanne's spirit if not her heart. The other mended it.

Chadbourne was a widower when he met Jeanne Eagels. And everybody who saw him with Jeanne, or admired the jewels he gave her, believed that he would marry her.

Jeanne made no secret of her love; and Chadbourne openly boasted of her beauty and her talent, and was proud to have her accompany him to public places, wearing his jewels.

He used to attend all the rehearsals of "The Wonderful Thing," and when Jeanne collapsed on the stage he ran to her, and picked her up, and wept as he carried her to her dressing room. He patted her hands,

and kissed her forehead, and worried until she opened her eyes. She laughed and called herself a silly thing to faint, and a cruel thing to cause him so much anguish.

But there was no need for Jeanne to seek an annulment of her marriage to Morris Dubinsky, for Chadbourne's ardor cooled. Jeanne blamed Maxine Elliot for this, and hated Maxine to her dying day—but without reason.

Jeanne was invited to a party given for Maxine, and, believing that everyone there would expect to see her loaded down with Chadbourne's jewels, she appeared in a simple white dress, without even a bracelet or a ring. All her jewels had been left at her home. When she returned she saw that the flat had been entered. Every trinket Chadbourne had given her—and they were many and costly—had been taken. Nothing else had been touched.

Jeanne immediately informed Chadbourne of the robbery; and he told her how sorry he was. He blamed himself for not having had the gems insured. But he did not replace the stolen gifts; and in a few weeks he married a society woman.

Jeanne was ill for months after Chadbourne left her, and Madame Savage at times despaired of her life. When "The Wonderful Thing" closed, and her money was spent, Jeanne went to Madame Savage, not only for consolation, but that she might live.

Two years went by before Jeanne again saw her lost

lover. It was on the night of her greatest triumph, her first night as " Sadie Thompson " in " Rain."

Chadbourne and his wife sat in the first row with Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Bayard Swope. Jeanne saw him when she came on the stage in her pathetic finery —the high white buttoned shoes, the white lace coat falling over her skirt, the discouraged plume drooping from her white straw hat, and the cheap parasol she held like a dowager's cane. She could not help but see him. But she ignored his presence until almost the curtain speech in the second act, where she turns on the Reverend Davidson.

Then she looked full on him, and in all that vast audience she saw no one but him. Who knows what was in her mind, what memories of love and hate, what bitterness, what regret?

She spoke the words she was to speak to the Reverend Davidson. But she spoke to Chadbourne. Spoke? She shouted—with her hands clenched into fists, and held on her hips, her face distorted.

" You! You! I know your kind, you dirty two-faced mutt! I'll bet when you were a kid you caught flies and pulled their wings off! I bet you stuck pins in frogs, just to see 'em wiggle and flap while you read 'em a Sunday school lesson. I know you. You'd tear the heart out of your grandmother if she didn't think your way and tell her you were saving her soul, you—you—you psalm-singing son of a ———— ! "

The last word was supposed to be covered in an

inarticulate shriek of rage. Sometimes it was. Sometimes it wasn't.

This night the word was not muted in a shriek, and it was delivered with such genuine bitter feeling that the audience sensed its realness and thundered its applause.

Jeanne turned away from Chadbourne, turned from him forever, and went on with the scene, the woman's feelings lost in the actress's emotion.

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VIII

IN order to play the part of "Jacqueline" in "The Wonderful Thing," Jeanne Eagels had to acquire a slight Gallic accent. But she felt she ought not to adopt the "zis, zat, and ze ozzer zing" of the average stage Frenchman. She determined to find a teacher who knew the niceties of accent, and Madame Novelle Davis, her vocal instructor, recommended Maria Savage.

Madame Davis accompanied her pupil to the apartment occupied by Madame Savage and her two daughters. It was the day after Christmas, 1919, and the little flat was chill.

There was a tiny Christmas tree in the parlor, and a few ornaments dangled from its branches—a blue and red glass ball, a crystal bell, and a string of red and white pop-corn. There were a couple of bisque dolls lying at its base. But the children were happy, pretending that the tree towered up through the ceiling, that it was heavily loaded with candles and toys and glittery ropes of silver and gold and covered with snow that shone like diamonds.

"Isn't it beautiful?" Nellie Savage asked. "And isn't my doll-house wonderful? And my dishes, and my doll clothes, and the little bed?"

Jeanne went down on her knees, and gathered the girls in her arms, and played the game with them.

"Gorgeous," she said, between tears and laughter. "And the baby carriage for your littlest doll is exactly what I would want. What fortunate girls you are to have such presents, and so many of them."

Nellie snuggled closer to the beautiful lady.

"You're sweet," she said, "sweeter than you smell." Her little nose sniffed Jeanne's perfume. "And you understand."

"Of course I understand," Jeanne said. "And you must both come to my home tomorrow. I have lots of things you might like."

When the girls did visit Jeanne, a week or so later, she opened her closet for them. Hats rained from the shelves, hats of all kinds, and the girls were told to take as many as they wanted. Gowns were taken from their hangers and heaped up for them. They were too big, of course, but "mama can make them over for you." And there was cake, and ice-cream, and little boxes of candy, and some toys that Santa Claus had intended for the two, and left by mistake with Jeanne.

The friendship thus begun ended only with Jeanne's death. Jeanne and Madame Savage—whom she soon began to call "Mama Froggy"—quarreled many times. Jeanne quarreled with everybody. But the quarrels were always mended.

They quarreled shortly after Jeanne began her lessons, and Jeanne left the flat vowing she would never

return. Half an hour later she knocked on the door. Madame Savage, expecting the ice man, looked out to see a huge cake in the arms of a girl. The cake was wider than the door itself. It was bigger in circumference than a round table. It was so high it hid the face of the holder, so heavy the girl could scarcely bear its weight.

"What's this?" Mama Froggy asked. "I didn't order any cake. And we couldn't eat this one in a year."

The cake was lowered slowly. The top of a blue hat appeared above it, a strand of gold hair, a pair of impish eyes, a saucy nose, a bow-mouth, a beautiful stubborn chin.

"Jeanne!"

"Am I forgiven, Mama Froggy? If I am, let's wheel this in and have a little banquet."

Mama Froggy not only perfected Jeanne's accent, she also taught her French. Jeanne was enthusiastic in her study—but lazy at times—and the irregular verbs were mysteries she never quite solved. She learned to converse in French, not so fluently as a native, perhaps, but "rather well."

The accent Mama Froggy taught her, however, she spoke easily and well. It helped to make the play.

"You are not to say 'zis' and 'zat,'" Madame Savage said. "A French peasant, or a Parisian taxi driver or hotel clerk, learning English, might pronounce his words in that manner. But a cultured Frenchman?

Never, cherie! You are a cultured young English lady, and the French nuns would have taught you to pronounce every English syllable distinctly. So you will speak haltingly. You will say, not 'Zank you, sair,' nor 'Sank you.' It will be—'Th-ank you.'"

When the bright bubble of romance burst, and Jeanne went to live with Mama Froggy, the lessons went on. But the two women ceased to be teacher and pupil. They were foster mother and daughter.

Mama Froggy's flat in 65th Street was the first real home Jeanne Eagels had known in fourteen years—since she left her father's house in Kansas City. Mama Froggy was the first stranger in all that time who took a motherly interest in Jeanne.

"If I had been your daughter," Jeanne said to her, "I would be happy and content today—but I would not be Jeanne Eagels."

Jeanne wasn't a guest in the French teacher's household. She was one of the family. She washed the dishes. She scrubbed the floors. She did the marketing. She cooked the meals, or arranged chop suey parties.

When there was nothing else to do, no floors to sweep nor beds to make, no rehearsals, no theatrical manager to visit, Jeanne and Maria Savage would go for a walk in Broadway, or through the park. Usually they would end their walk in some auctioneer's.

Jeanne loved auctions, whether she had money to spend or not, and attended them whenever she could.

Unexpectedly she received $100, a debt someone had owed her for years, and she started out "to scatter sunshine in the drab lives of my creditors."

She paused on her way, to glance into the window of an auction shop, and saw a beautiful sandalwood box. She forgot her creditors, as she had a way of doing, and walked into the shop. It was her first experience with an auctioneer.

"I want that gorgeous box in the window," she said. "How much is it?"

The suave auctioneer smiled, and stroked his white side whiskers.

"I don't do business that way. I'll put it up, and let you bid on it."

He took the box from the window and held it out to the little group of men and women who had preceded Jeanne to the shop.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said. "I have here for sale the most beautiful sandalwood box I have ever seen in my long career. It is a perfect example of the boxmaker's art. It is a box fit for milady's jewels, for love letters, for scented dainty silken handkerchiefs, for snowy white gloves, for treasured documents—a box that may be used for many things and still remain an ornament, an object d'art. What am I bid for it?"

Nobody answered. Jeanne didn't know what to say. And she didn't think it fair that all these people should be allowed to get that box away from her. She solaced herself with the thought that she had one hun-

dred dollars in her hand. But if it cost more than that ——

"Come, come! Here's the chance of a lifetime, friends. This box is a wonderful bargain at twenty dollars. Do I hear anybody say 'Twenty dollars'?"

"Twenty dollars!" said Jeanne quickly.

"Twenty dollars. Must I sell this treasure for twenty dollars? Who'll say twenty-five dollars?"

"Twenty-five," said Jeanne.

Eventually, with no one bidding against her, Jeanne paid thirty dollars for the box, and didn't realize until she had brought it home to Mama Froggy that she might have bought it for much less.

In the Savage home today there is an ugly heavy marble-topped table. Madame Savage would not sell it for any amount of money, for it was a present from Jeanne. Jeanne bought it at an auction, not because she wanted it exactly, but because it was a bargain—and because it was great fun getting it away from another bidder. It cost a lot more to get it home than she had paid for it.

When Jeanne and Mama Froggy didn't go "auctioning" they went window-shopping or pricing, Jeanne ever on the watch to play a joke on the unsuspecting little French woman. Thus in a furrier's store she tried on a coat valued at $800, and talked seriously of buying it.

Madame Savage knew that Jeanne didn't have a penny, and couldn't possibly buy the coat without go-

ing $800 into debt, and she was furious at Jeanne, and still more furious at the insistent salesman.

"Isn't it lovely?" Jeanne cried, looking at herself in the huge glass, turning, posing, preening, smoothing the fur with her slim hands.

"It's ugly," Madame Savage said. "It doesn't fit. It was designed by a cobbler, made by a shoemaker, and priced by a robber."

"It is exactly what madame should have," the salesman interjected, waving his arms and shooting looks of venom at Madame Savage. "Never you see a coat like that for so poor a price. For $800 I am giving it away yet. I am ruined by so cheap a price. And you call me a robber. Oi!"

"It was a lot of fun," Jeanne explained, when she and Mama Froggy left the shop. "I had no intention of buying the coat. But I knew how you'd act. And the salesman! Oh, if you could only have seen your face! And his!"

She leaned against a shop window and laughed until the tears came to her eyes. And when they arrived home she reënacted the scene in the furrier's, and Mama Froggy laughed as heartily as Jeanne.

II

Jeanne Eagels, recovering from the blow of Chadbourne's marriage, was listless, unambitious, content, for the time, to live a domestic life with Mama

Froggy. But once she had fully recovered, ambition grew strong again, and "the greatest actress in the world" once more began to look for a part that suited her.

She found it, eventually, in the rôle of Eugenie de Corlaix, wife of a French naval officer in "In the Night Watch," a melodrama by Michael Morton. Cyril Scott, Margaret Dale, Paget Hunter, Knox Orde, Edmund Lowe, Maclyn Arbuckle, Robert Warwick, Robert Thorne, and Kenneth Lawton were in the cast.

The action concerned the destruction of a French battle-ship by a German submarine, and the subsequent court martial of the ship's commander. The critics didn't rave over the piece, though they did say Jeanne Eagels was "especially good."

Jeanne left Mama Froggy's home shortly before the play opened, and rented an apartment at 17 West 57th Street. She signed a long term lease, which turned out to be an investment, and insisted that Mama Froggy live with her part of the time.

She had hardly moved in when the owners of the building decided to remodel it, and ordered the tenants to vacate. Some lease-holders did move. Others left only after obtaining "concessions." Jeanne refused to vacate unless the owners made it worth her while. She asked for $25,000. This was refused, and though the owners began to wreck the building, Jeanne stayed.

In time Jeanne and Mama Froggy had to walk

up ladders to the apartment, the owners having dismantled the stairway, and take the risk of having their clothes soiled by falling plaster or mortar. The noise of the carpenters and riveters wakened them at 8 in the morning, and would not let them sleep any longer. Bit by bit the rooms all around were demolished; but Jeanne laughed and said she would stay until the walls fell. The owners knew she meant it, and began to offer money. Jeanne still demanded $25,000, but accepted $7,000.

She owed scores of people, and dozens of subpœna-servers were looking for her. They came to the Century Theatre every night, but they never found her. They were not allowed back stage, but nobody could keep them from waiting at the stage door. Yet Jeanne always avoided them.

Every night, when she was ready to go home and climb ladders—sometimes holding a lighted match in one hand—she would go into the dressing room of Robert Warwick, and jump from his window into the runway that led to the street. No one ever thought of waiting for her there.

Once in a cab she would order the driver to drive into the alley and wait, and in the alley she would enjoy herself watching the subpœna-servers who were waiting for her. Frequently Warwick occupied the cab with her, and helped her enjoy the joke on the hunters.

One newspaper has intimated that Jeanne, while

playing in this melodrama, was in love with Cyril Scott, the villain. It made much of the fact that Mrs. Scott, after twenty years of happy married life, hanged herself in her home in Bayside, L. I. The newspaper hinted that the unfortunate woman was jealous of the blonde Eagels, though it did not say so.

If Jeanne were in love with anyone at this time, it was with Warwick. But love was still a sour memory to her. She liked Warwick. Yet when "In the Night Watch" closed, and Jeanne received her $7,000 she treated Warwick as she treated the subpœna-servers and her creditors. She went to Europe, where she stayed until she had only enough money to pay her passage back to New York.

Jeanne went abroad ostensibly as the guest of Mabel and Clifton Webb. But it was in reality an Italian stevedore who was her escort.

This man had grown up with Jimmy Auditore and Jimmy Walker, and many others who are now "big shots" in New York and powers in Tammany Hall and at one time he hustled freight around the docks of the Italian Steamship Company. It was Auditore who made him a millionaire, Auditore, the most astute, the most powerful, the most generous of all the New York Italians who came up from nothing.

Auditore is known to New York as "the stevedore millionaire," but his friend and protégé also deserves that title, and in these pages shall be so called.

"The stevedore millionaire," then, fell violently in

love with the frail blonde actress when he went to see "In the Night Watch," and began at once to pursue her, though he had a wife and two children.

He sent her tubs of orchids and she gave them to her maid. He sent her brooches and bracelets and rings and jeweled pins, and she returned them without thanks. He phoned her and she told him, "I don't want anything to do with you."

It was months before she consented to meet him, and that was because she felt that perhaps he really loved her. The abrupt ending of her idyll with Chadbourne had embittered her, made her cynical, hard. She wanted no man. Men were all alike. They didn't know love. They didn't love. They walked into a woman's life, asked everything, took what they could, paid with money or with jewels, and left when they were surfeited or piqued. Men—she hated them.

But "the stevedore millionaire" was actually in love with Jeanne, and desperate. And, when all else failed, he resorted to a proof of love that was also a plea and a threat.

He sent to Jeanne's dressing room a package that needed four men to carry it. When Jeanne unwrapped it she found a coffin made of brocaded silks and satins, beautifully cushioned and lined, and fitted with handles of ivory and solid gold. It was not so expensive a casket as the bronze and silver one in which she was buried; and it was garish and splendidly ugly; but it contained thousands of dollars worth of orchids, and

a note written from the heart—" Love me or lie among the flowers."

Love or death—Jeanne wanted neither.

She laughed at first, and then tears came to her eyes.

" It's hideously beautiful," she said to her maid, " but there's something pathetic about it too. Don't you think so? "

Perhaps this man did love her, as she had loved Chadbourne. And she had treated him shamefully.

" Love me or lie among the flowers." What sort of man was this? He must have imagination. He must love deeply to be so desperate. He must be reckless to be so direct.

She was not afraid, for there was no fear in her, and at first she decided to send the coffin back to him and exchange his threatening note with a defiant one but the barbaric earnestness of the man had made him suddenly the most interesting person in the world.

It is possible, too, that Jeanne contrasted him with the polished Chadbourne and others who had made love to her.

The stevedore was primitive, big, awkward, almost incoherent. He could say little. He could not make the polite speeches Jeanne had become accustomed to hear, but polite speeches now brought ironic memories. He did not look the gentleman even in a gentleman's attire. But Jeanne had met too many gentlemen. The man was someone Jeanne Eagels, the tent show girl,

might have met casually and forgotten. But for Jeanne Eagels, the great actress, he was an adventure.

She phoned him, and bade him come to see her. He came with a fury of love burning in his eyes, and a shyness, almost a reverence, in his manner. Jeanne laughed as he apologized for his atrocious gift, and studied him as he stooped to take her hand and kiss it—the massiveness of him, the great head, the black eyes, the sleek black hair, the long arms, the hands that could hurl a hogshead a hundred feet, or smack a man into sudden slumber.

Ever after, she both admired and despised him; admired him for his gentleness, his generosity, his patience, his love of her, his strength, his eagerness to please; despised him for his wife and children, his gaucheries, his clumsy English, his slavishness, his servility, his groveling adoration.

Even when she was living in the luxurious rooms he rented for her, she treated him with contempt and cruelty.

"I'm having some friends in for dinner," she would say, "and I don't want you coming here until they have gone. I will not be shamed before my guests. I don't want them to suspect I even know such a person as you."

The stevedore would call, piteously, at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, to ask if the guests had gone, and if he might not see her for just a moment or two, "to say gooda-night and God blessa you!" Frequently

Jeanne said "Go home, for God's sake, and let me alone."

Many times, dining with him, she left abruptly and without explanation, to keep a rendezvous with another man. This happened once in the Café de la Paix in Paris. Jeanne saw a friend, and ran from the stevedore to greet him. She walked away with him, and was gone for hours. When she returned she introduced him and the stevedore broke a bottle of wine over his head.

Gendarmes led victim and victor to the cells. The stevedore paid a fine, and told Jeanne it was nothing, but he was sorry he had lost his temper, and "damaged" her friend. He begged Jeanne to humiliate him no more, and promised to be "very, very good." But it took more than an apology to placate Jeanne. It needed something for her lovely neck, just a little string of diamonds.

Jeanne went abroad as the guest of the Webbs, but she paid her own way despite the fact that the stevedore went along on the trip. Jeanne loved independence more than she loved money.

She returned with the Webbs, Louise Groody, Jimmy Auditore, and the stevedore. The ship was but a day out of New York when Jeanne lost the necklace bought on the "street of peace," and given to her as a peace offering and a pledge of undying love.

She was telling Mabel and Clifton Webb exactly what she thought of the stevedore when he chanced to

stroll by and overhear. The group was standing on the promenade deck, aft, leaning against the rail.

"I hate him," Jeanne was saying. "I detest him. I loathe him. But I can't get rid of him. He follows me like a dog. And the more I insult him the fonder he becomes."

The stevedore ran to her and tore the necklace from her throat. He ripped it apart with his mighty hands. Diamonds popped out of their settings, and fell on the deck. The stevedore kicked them with his feet, and tossed the bits of necklace over the rail. Then he seized Jeanne's hands and tore the rings from her fingers and the bracelets from her wrists, and jumped on them, screaming oaths in English and Italian. When he had twisted and stamped his trinkets into shapeless, worthless things he fled, weeping.

Clifton Webb got down on hands and knees and explored the deck and the scuppers for loose diamonds, bits of platinum, masses of be-gemmed metal that had been bracelets and rings. He gathered them all in his hands, and presented them to Jeanne.

Jeanne took them and laughed, a throaty, teasing laugh.

"You looked so funny," she said, "the whole length of you down on the deck, writhing around like an angleworm."

She moved over to the rail and flung the sparkling handful into the sulphurous sea.

"Why did you do that?" Webb asked.

"Oh," said Jeanne airily. "He'll buy me more jewelry when we get to New York."

And it seems that she was right.

For years after Jeanne left him, the stevedore was haunted with the vision of her face. Every wall in his home was covered with pictures of her. He went to all the musical comedies and all the burlesque shows, and all the supper clubs, and all the moving picture studios in and near New York, looking for a face like Jeanne's, listening for a voice like Jeanne's, hungering even for a gesture that would remind him of her. He grew thin and pale. He drank too much. He confided in everyone.

"She was cruel and cold, and she never loved me," was the tenor of his tale, told in an idiom that stuttered and a voice that broke. "She shuddered if I touched her. She hated me like the devil, but how I loved her! And there is no one else in all the world like her. I see her all day, and speak to her, and she is gone. When I sleep I dream about her, and she laughs and disappears. I think maybe I will die of wanting her. And if she knew, she would laugh! She could see me dead and her little silver voice would laugh, and her lovely hands would clap."

It was but a month before Jeanne died that the stevedore was cured of his malady. It was in a quiet little speakeasy in 68th Street, a beautiful place with rich tapestries on the walls and plush carpets on the floor, soft lights, and comfortable chairs. The stevedore

owned it, and had furnished it, astonishingly enough, in exquisite taste.

Jeanne sat at a table with one of her last lovers, and drank, and smoked, and laughed, and talked. When she saw the stevedore she smiled graciously, and crooked her finger to him.

As he came toward the table Jeanne turned to her escort and asked his permission to introduce the stevedore.

"Do you mind? He's an old friend. You'll find him interesting, at least."

The stevedore came, not with diffidence now, but with dignity. He smiled, but not with love, and not with reverence. He accepted an invitation to drink with them. But he insisted on serving the drink.

"I own the place," he explained, "and you shall have the best champagne in the house."

If he remembered that he had furnished the champagne for the party that followed Jeanne's marriage to Ted Coy, he did not talk of it. If he felt jealous of Jeanne's new love, he gave no sign of it. He talked easily, naturally, and when Jeanne decided to go, he walked with her to the door, and told her and her escort they were always welcome. He did not kiss her hand when he said good-bye. He did not see her again until she lay in her splendid coffin in Broadway.

He found there the man he had last seen with Jeanne, and took him aside.

"She looks as lovely as she always did," he said in

his bad English. "Perhaps it is best that she is dead. Poor Jeanne! For years I went about New York, speaking her name to myself, seeing her in every woman who passed. For years I hungered to have her back again, and cried myself to sleep because I knew it could not be. Me, a big strong man, I wept like a child.

"For years I mourned her like one that is dead. And now that she is dead—I am sorry, yes. But I do not mourn as I did when she was alive. You remember, one night you brought her to my place near the Park? That night something went out of my heart—forever.

"I don't know how it was. I sat there and watched her, and you, for a long, long time before you saw me. At first I could not move. I sat like one who has dreamed beautiful things, and wakes to find them true. She was there before me, the girl who had been dead to me so many years. She was alive. She was just as beautiful, just as gay, just as dainty as she always was. But something had changed. Something had gone from her—the something I loved. Before my eyes she changed, slowly, slowly. Before my eyes the girl I loved so much became a woman I did not love.

"I can't tell how it happened. I only know that when you two went out of my place that night, all the loneliness and all the bitterness and all the longing and all the love that I'd ever craved—and been denied—went out of my heart forever. In a moment I was

laughing like a fool, because I was happy, because I was free, because I was cured.

"It is good I saw her that one last time. I think if I had not seen her then, if I had seen her only now—so young, so sweet, so beautiful in her coffin I would have killed myself to be with her at last."

IX

SAM HARRIS, when he saw Jeanne Eagels in "Daddies," vowed that some day she would be one of his stars. And Sam Forrest, his stage director, who had seen Jeanne first in "The Outcast," knew that Jeanne should be a star.

When the two Sams were casting for "My Lady's Lips," therefore, and learned that Jeanne was free, they grasped the opportunity to engage her.

Jeanne had spent her $7,000 in Europe. She had quarreled with the stevedore millionaire, and had walked out of the room he furnished for her, leaving all his gifts behind her. She was again dodging creditors. And she was glad to get the chance of working for Sam Harris. She was fond of Harris, and she needed the money he offered.

"My Lady's Lips" had but three rôles. Jeanne was to have the lead. Martha Hedman was to have the second rôle, and William Powell the other. Jeanne accepted the script, and declared she was enthusiastic about it. Forrest began rehearsals almost immediately; and then Jeanne changed her mind.

"You'll have to get somebody else for this part," she told Forrest. "I'm sorry, but I can't play it. It isn't my sort of rôle. I can't put myself into it."

"But——" Forrest began.

"I know," Jeanne interrupted. "It's a wonderful part, and I raved about it. But I find it isn't for me. I'm not trying to trick you. I haven't any other offer. I'm not trying to get out of this so I can better myself. In fact I think I shall starve until I get something else. I am merely being honest with you—and with myself. If I go through with the part, I know I will not give a good performance. I can't put myself into the character. I'm sorry, but I can't do anything else."

Forrest was angry and indignant. No actress had ever rehearsed a play with him, before, and then walked out with "I'm sorry." Such things are not done. They are against nature. He engaged another actress, but he didn't forget Jeanne Eagels. The girl needed a lesson, and some day she would get it—when she wanted another job from Sam Harris.

If Jeanne worried about her predicament—and actresses out of work worry as much as bricklayers—she pretended otherwise. Lean months followed, but she was always ready for a chow mein or chop suey party at the Webbs, or a ginger ale and ice-cream spree with Mama Froggy. Her feet danced through living rooms and dressing rooms. She was "the life of every party," as she always was.

She could count on Clifton Webb to take her to the opera. And the "courtesies of the profession" were always given her at the box offices of theatres.

Webb had season tickets to the opera, and he and Jeanne always sat next to Zoe Akins and Jobyna How-

land. All during the performance the four would sit entranced, and all during the intermission they would chatter volubly.

"I'm going to write you a play, Jeanne," Zoe promised. "And if Elsie Ferguson doesn't take 'The Varying Shore,' I'll give you that."

Miss Akins had written this play for Elsie, but Elsie was in France, and Zoe—and Jeanne—must wait for her return, to know whether or not she would take it. Zoe brought the manuscript to Jeanne that she might study it.

"It won't do you any harm to read it," she said, "and if Elsie doesn't care for it, and you do, you'll know it by heart before rehearsals start."

Jeanne read the play, and phoned Zoe.

"It's beautiful," she said. "It's glorious. I've read it and rehearsed it. I've died and gone to heaven. If I don't get it I'll be broken-hearted."

It was difficult for Zoe to relay her news. She had a cable from Elsie. She was coming home, and must have the play.

"Don't take it so hard, though," she tried to console Jeanne. "I'm writing a play for you. I'm calling it 'Moonflower,' and I think you'll love it."

Zoe went to Europe without finishing "Moonflower," however, and when the play was done it was too late for Jeanne. She was already rehearsing for "Rain."

Elsie Ferguson played "The Varying Shore," and

it failed in New York, though it met with some little success on the road. If Jeanne had played it—and made a success—she might never have played "Sadie Thompson" in "Rain." Elsie Ferguson was glad to get "Moonflower," the play written for Jeanne, and was superb in the part. The play made a great success.

Jeanne went back to Mama Froggy's after she had walked out of the cast of "My Lady's Lips," and it was many months before she was given another opportunity to prove herself an actress.

Curiously enough it was Sam Forrest who gave her that chance.

Sam's wife, Mary Ryan, was in Chicago when she received the manuscript of "A Gentleman's Mother." She liked it, but inasmuch as she had played a somewhat similar rôle in "Red Light Annie," she felt that if she accepted the play the public might think her a "one character actress." She sent the play to her husband with the remark that there was but one other woman in America who could play it—Jeanne Eagels.

Forrest broke his pencil in two and threw the pieces on the floor.

Jeanne Eagels, eh? The only girl who had ever walked out on him. He went to Sam Harris with the manuscript and his wife's letter.

"I've read the play," he said, "and it might make a hit. And Jeanne Eagels would be great in it. She'll be glad if you give her a chance. She needs work. But she isn't going to walk out on me again."

"She will," said Harris. "And she won't. Get her on the phone now and tell her I want to talk to her."

It was the spring breaking after a cold hard winter, the dawn of stardom, the faint stirring of Success after years of poverty and struggle and despair. It was the telephone ringing in Mama Froggy's flat, and a voice saying, "Sam Harris wants to see Jeanne Eagels right away—and make it snappy."

II

Sam Harris outlined the play to Jeanne, and she consented—only too readily—to take the part he offered, and to be "good."

"It's really a great character you have in this play," Harris told her. "In the first act you are an old woman. You tend bar in a French seaport town, like Calais. You speak French for half the act. All the people who drift into the bar speak French. Finally an Englishman enters, and you speak English to him."

"I can speak French," said Jeanne.

"I know," said Harris. "And you speak English too. But you are not to speak it with the broad A, if you please. The Englishman is surprised to hear you speak his native tongue, and without a trace of foreign accent—cockney, perhaps, but not foreign. You explain that you were born in London, and that at one time you were a soubrette. We darken the stage, and in a few seconds we spot you, no longer the old French

woman tending bar, but a beautiful young soubrette. You sing. You dance."

"I can do it," Jeanne said, her eyes widening, shining. She rose quickly from her chair, sang a snatch of song, shuffled a few steps. Harris clapped his hands, and made her sit down again.

Jeanne gave him her sweetest smile.

"You had a baby when you were hardly more than a baby yourself," he went on. "The child was taken from you. You don't know where he is. You feel he is alive, and all your life you have hoped and prayed that whatever else he might grow up to be, he would be a gentleman."

"I understand," said Jeanne. She did not look at Harris.

"The Englishman has a fight, and kills one of the Frenchmen in the bar, and the old woman, who has discovered the boy is her son, attempts to take the blame. She begs him to flee, explaining that if he doesn't escape he will be put to death. She tells him she will say that she killed the man to protect her property and her life. She will have to spend some time in jail, but she will be in no danger of punishment, she insists, because she has a valid defence. But the Englishman refuses. He tells the old woman there are some things a gentleman may not do—even to save his life. And the woman is happy because she knows at last that her prayers have been answered, and her son is the gentleman she hoped he would be."

Jeanne nodded her head. Was she thinking of her own boy?

"Now I'm going to call in Forrest," Harris said, getting out of his chair. "He's pretty sore, and I don't blame him. I'll leave you alone with him, and you make your peace. Remember, from now on—he's your boss."

Jeanne apologized in a manner all her own.

"Oh, Mr. Forrest," she said, as soon as he opened the door, "Mr. Harris has been telling me all about you. He says you are the most wonderful director he ever had! He says you're a genius! He depends upon you completely! He says you know more about the theatre than anybody in the world, himself included!"

Before Forrest had crawled out from beneath this avalanche of flattery and the sweetest and most cozening of smiles, he almost begged Jeanne's pardon for resenting her desertion of "My Lady's Lips."

"And I've promised Mr. Harris," Jeanne went on before she could be stopped, "that I'm going to be very, very good. I'm going to work hard for you, Mr. Forrest. I'll do everything you say, and we won't have a bit of trouble."

She did everything but kiss him.

And never were there more harmonious relations between actress and director than existed between Jeanne Eagels and Sam Forrest during the rehearsals of "A Gentleman's Mother."

Jeanne rehearsed day and night, and Mama Froggy

was with her all the time, helping to perfect her in the character of a French woman bartender. Forrest was delighted with her work, and Harris enthusiastic.

"There isn't another woman on the stage so versatile," Harris remarked to Forrest. "I didn't believe anyone could change her character so quickly. She's perfect as the old hag at the bar. And the next moment she's perfect as the soubrette. I'd almost swear two women played those parts. Maybe she is what she claims to be, the greatest actress in the world."

"She is," Forrest agreed. "And the nicest. They said she couldn't rehearse. Did you ever see anyone better at a rehearsal? Or more docile? Why, she'd eat sugar out of your hand."

The play opened in Atlantic City. It was a failure. It was rewritten later. Mary Nash played it as "The Lady." And when it was sold to the movies it became Norma Talmadge's greatest success.

The play failed, but the actress triumphed. An actress is only as good as her rôle—but it takes more than a rôle to make a play.

"Don't feel bad, Jeanne," Harris said. "You were marvelous. It wasn't your fault. It was the fault of the play. I'm going to pep it up and do it over again, and you can have it if you want to. Or you can have a new play I've just read. It's called 'Rain,' and I think it has a chance."

Jeanne's face lighted up, and on the way home to

Mama Froggy's, she bought a quart of ice-cream with cherries in it.

"First we'll have a banquet," she said. "Then we'll read the play."

The next day Jeanne called up Zoe Akins, who had recently returned from Europe.

"Honey," she said, "you don't have to finish 'Moonflower' for me. I've been given a wonderful part in a play called 'Rain,' by a man named John Colton. He wrote it out of Somerset Maugham's short story, 'Miss Thompson.'"

"I've heard of that play," Zoe said, "and I don't see what you want with it. I can't see you in it at all."

Zoe hadn't read the play. But she had read the story, the story of a girl with thick ankles whose very ugliness fascinated the missionary who wanted to convert her, and led to his destruction.

"Helen McKellar was offered the part," Zoe went on, "and Marjorie Rambeau, and lots of other good actresses, and they all turned it down. I think they were wise. I understand that Maugham himself didn't believe there was a play in his story, and that he sold his rights for a few hundred dollars. I hate to think of you in another flop. Why don't you wait for a while? If I haven't finished 'Moonflower' soon, something else will turn up."

Jeanne's visions of herself as "Sadie Thompson" were dimmed. Zoe Akins ought to know. She had written many plays. She wouldn't advise a friend to

refuse a play if she didn't think the play was bad. Still, the part of "Sadie" looked wonderful on paper.

"What do you think, Mama Froggy?" Jeanne asked.

"I think you'd be foolish to throw away this opportunity just because somebody can't see you in the rôle."

Suddenly Jeanne remembered her conversation with Willard Mack, and his prophecy that some day some man would write a play of the South Seas, and that if Jeanne were fortunate enough to appear in it, she might become a star.

She turned again to the manuscript and read her entrance line aloud—"So! I'm to be parked here, am I, dearie?"

And Sadie Thompson was born in the flesh.

III

Jeanne Eagels, reading "Rain," was unaware that Pauline Armitage went to sleep every night serene and happy in the thought that she was to have it.

John D. Williams and Kent Thurber, who became interested in the play after it had been turned down by a dozen of America's greatest actresses, had offered the part of "Sadie" to Miss Armitage. But they didn't have money enough to produce it, and "Rain" came into the hands of Sam Harris. Williams and Thurber told him that they had picked Miss Armitage for the lead, but Harris laughed at them.

"Jeanne Eagels gets the first refusal of it," he said. "I don't know much about Armitage. But I know Eagels, and I have her under contract."

Pauline brooded, especially after Jeanne made such a success in the play, and for months she could speak of little but her loss.

"I would be famous too, if I had been given that rôle—and it should have been mine. I was promised it. I wanted it. I loved it. I rehearsed it. I was perfect in the rôle before I knew that Jeanne Eagels was rehearsing it. It isn't fair. And the way Eagels plays it! Oh, she's good enough, I suppose. But if I were playing 'Sadie'—you know that part in the second act where ——"

The fame and the money that came to Eagels, the homage other actresses paid her, the hoity-toity manner that came to her, Armitage envied. She believed that Eagels had stolen them from her.

She would not forgive Eagels.

When she threw herself out of a fourteenth story window in the Shelton Hotel some years later, her suicide was attributed to nervous prostration, to despair and despondency—she had been out of work for four months—and to a love affair with Wilson Mizner. Yet the real cause of her suicide, the basis of all her despondency, was the loss of the golden part in "Rain."

Pauline jumped to her death when her maid left her for a moment to answer the telephone. The call was from a Broadway agent who said he had a great rôle

for Pauline to play—one that would feature her if it did not make her a star.

Jeanne wouldn't have surrendered her part to Pauline, even if she had known Pauline expected it. She would have asked "Who is Pauline Armitage?" And she would have answered, "An indifferent actress of little experience." She would have argued that her twenty years in the theatre, and her ability to portray a character, should outweigh any claim Pauline might have, no matter how valid.

By the time rehearsals were half over Jeanne wouldn't have given up Sadie Thompson, even if she knew it would prevent Pauline's suicide. It would have been impossible, for by that time she was not playing Sadie, she was Sadie.

Critics have said Jeanne Eagels knew what Sadie looked like when she went to school, what books she carried, what boys she flirted with, what clothes she wore, what food she ate; and that she had known Simone—the character she played in "Her Cardboard Lover"—long before she ever heard of her.

Jeanne knew Sadie as she knew herself. Jeanne was not Sadie. Sadie was Jeanne, done over for a play.

Jeanne derived as much enjoyment from dressing Sadie as she did from building her into a character. She went all over New York before she found the kind of frock and coat and hat and shoes that Sadie would wear. She got the shoes at a dingy East Side bargain counter, after weeks of searching for them. She paid

$2 for them. They were on sale. She gave a shoe manufacturer an order to make her a dozen pair exactly like them. The white straw hat with its one bedraggled plume she found somewhere in the Bronx, and the coat of salmon pink sateen showing through white lace she picked up in a second-hand store on the Bowery. Sadie's parasol came out of a fire sale, her bracelets from the five and ten, and her beads from Mama Froggy. Geraldine Farrar had given them to the French woman, and she gave them to Jeanne "for luck."

Jeanne was thin and peaked when she began rehearsals for "Rain." Her face was the color of a man's vest lining, and her clothes were not much better than those she bought for Sadie. She had no money, no jewels, no credit. And for the first time in her life she begged for advice.

"I don't want to be a prostitute," she said to Sam Forrest. "The play doesn't really call me one. It intimates that I came to Pago Pago out of the red light district of Honolulu, but maybe I didn't. I can't feel myself a prostitute. I don't want me to be cheap, sordid, vulgar. Sam, just what would you be, if you were playing Sadie?"

Sam laughed at her, in a kindly way, and said bluntly:

"You're not a prostitute, you're just a common harlot, a street-walker looking for a man with a dollar. Oh, you're a good fellow, all right. There's no malice

in you and no morals either. You'd give your extra shirt, if you had one, to anyone you liked. You drink when you can. You think Christ is a swear word. You're a lonely soul, but you don't know it. You're an outcast, but you don't realize it until you fall in love with the big Marine, and learn that he wants to marry you."

"All right, I'll be a common harlot then—but not a cheap one, Sam. I'll be a little pathetic, and not too vulgar. There's good stuff in me, but I've never had a chance to show it. I'm bad, maybe—but everybody likes me—everybody but the Reverend Davidson and his wife, and Mrs. MacPhail."

Jeanne always defended Sadie. Any reflection on Sadie's morals she took as a reflection on herself.

A San Francisco reporter once asked her if she didn't want to visit the "Barbary Coast, where Sadie came from."

Jeanne was instantly aflame.

"How do you know she ever was there?" she demanded. "There isn't anything in the play to indicate it. Sadie is not a bad woman in the sense of evil. She is simply trying to get the most out of life, to enjoy herself. Mrs. Davidson, the missionary's wife, is a bad woman, an evil woman. And Mrs. MacPhail is the worst of all. What right had she to sneer at Sadie? People ask me if I am going to play another harlot when I'm through with Sadie. Does anybody know Sadie is a harlot?"

Jeanne accepted Sam Forrest's idea of Sadie, but with reservations.

"Now tell me, what'll I do in that first act, when I come on with Bates and see the Marines?" she asked.

"Be yourself," said Forrest. "Sing a little, dance a little—something like the soubrette in 'A Gentleman's Mother,' but different. See what I mean?"

"Great!" Jeanne cried. She hummed. She danced. She cried to the assembled group in the words of Sadie, "Put it on! The Wabash blues! Music and a nip of likka—that's what a rainy day is for, says I. Can you dance, Handsome?"

Handsome! Did the name bring back visions of Handsome Ed Dubinsky? Handsome from Kansas! Ghosts of long dead days! She must have seen herself again playing in the tent show, for she was now strutting across the stage as Marcella Hamilton had done when she played "Cross Bar Kate" in "Buffalo Bill Jr., The King of the Cowboys," and Forrest was crying, "That's it! That's Sadie! Do it like that all the time, Jeanne. That's immense!"

"I want Sadie to have a hoarse whisky voice," Jeanne explained to Mme. Novelle Davis. "She must talk as girls of her sort would. How can I give her such a voice?"

"Put your hands on your hips," Mme. Davis commanded. "That will let your vocal apparatus work at its best. Draw a deep breath. Lock it up in your

chest. Now talk as long as you can. When you run out of breath, stop, and fill your lungs again."

Jeanne followed instructions, and heard with amazement and delight the first words Sadie Thompson spoke.

"Oh, I love her," she cried. "I'm crazy about her."

Again she put her hands on her hips, breathed deeply, and spoke in the new voice. "When I get to San Francisco, Handsome, I've got to go to the penitentiary—for three years." She paused and took another breath. Her hands trembled a little. "Reverend Davidson says it doesn't make any difference whether I was innocent or guilty of what they framed me for." A pause to breathe in more air. "He says that is God's way of letting me square myself. He says I've got to accept an unjust punishment by man as a sacrifice to God!"

Mme. Davis hugged her pupil.

"You're wonderful," she said. "You make me cry."

"Reverend Davidson," Jeanne called in her new voice, savoring the richness and fullness of it, loving it, "Reverend Davidson! Why don't he come? Why don't he come?"

"You look so tough, with your hands on your hips, Jeanne dear. So tough—and so forlorn!"

Jeanne hurried to the theatre and tried out Sadie's voice for Forrest.

Sam looked at her in awe.

"Now I know," he said, "the play will be a hit."

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X

THE play "Rain" is the story of Sadie Thompson's redemption, not through the church, but through love. Sadie's folks came from Kansas City, but Sadie grew up in San Francisco. She fled that city and worked for a time in Honolulu. Shortly after the raiding of the red light district in Honolulu she lands at Pago Pago with the Reverend Davidson, his wife, and Dr. and Mrs. MacPhail, fellow passengers on the *Orduna*. Sadie is bound for Apia, but she—and the others—must wait for two weeks or more. The scene is the general store and hotel of Joe Horn, a trader, and his native wife Ameena.

It rains at intervals all during the play, and as it rains Sadie's phonograph grinds out "The Wabash Blues." The Reverend Davidson, a narrow and brow-beating missionary, insists that Sadie be taken back to San Francisco where she may purify her soul through punishment, despite the fact that Sadie tells him she was "framed," and that Handsome, the Marine sergeant, wants to send her to Sydney, Australia, where he intends to marry her.

Sadie is converted. She wants to go back to San Francisco. She no longer drinks. The phonograph is silent. She renounces Handsome. But the minister succumbs to the temptation that has been tearing at

him ever since the rain shut him into the general store with Sadie—and he cuts his throat. Then Sadie feels free once more. She will not go to San Francisco now. She will go to Sydney, with her Marine.

Sam Harris loved the play, but he feared that the ministers of the land might attack it, because of its delineation of the missionary, and sweep it off the boards. But Jeanne Eagels had no such fear.

"It's beautiful," she said. "And it's true. A minister tried to seduce me once. Another minister helped me when I most needed help. Ministers are human, like other men. They are good, bad, and indifferent. The Reverend Davidson is by no means bad. He is narrow, merciless, and implacable—but that is only because he really believed he has been ordained by God to save souls, and to fight sin with all his strength. He believes that sinners must be punished before they can be saved. He is an ascetic. He punishes nobody more than he punishes himself. He denies himself everything. He has a wife, but she isn't a wife to him. She is merely an assistant. The Reverend Davidson fights hard to save Sadie's soul—and then, when he discovers there is a human streak in him, he is so appalled, so stricken with shame, that he takes his life.

"The play is not an attack on ministers. It is a sermon on intolerance."

"I know," said Harris. "But——"

It was the Hall-Mills murder mystery that gave the play its chance. The Rev. Edward Hall's body was

found under a crab apple tree near New Brunswick, N. J., beside the body of Mrs. Eleanor Mills, the woman he loved. Their love letters had been strewn about them. Dr. Hall had had a wife, one of the richest women in the town. Mrs. Mills had had a husband, the janitor of the church.

"Now," said Jeanne, "nobody can say that we are attacking ministers."

"True," said Harris. "We can go ahead with the play."

"Rain" opened in Philadelphia, and it was not the hit that everyone connected with it had expected. It was a worse failure than "A Gentleman's Mother."

And now there arose two warring factions among those interested, financially or otherwise, in the play. One faction was for taking it on the chin and forgetting it. The other, which included Jeanne Eagels, Sam Forrest and Jack Colton, wanted to doctor the play and try it in New York.

"All it needs is a little rewriting," Forrest said. "The curtain speech in the second act is flat. Let me see if I can't fix it."

A group gathered in Jeanne's room at the hotel to make suggestions, to point out weak spots, to talk over glasses, and plates of sandwiches—and to damn Philadelphia and the Philadelphians. Forrest went to his room, and began to write.

It was after 2 o'clock in the morning when Forrest came rushing into Jeanne's room. He found every-

body sitting, drinking, smoking, talking—everyone but Jeanne. She was pacing the floor, silent, angry, puzzled.

"Have you got it?" she asked.

"I've got it," Forrest cried. "Listen to this, everybody. This is the new second act curtain speech. Sadie and Davidson are alone, and he says, 'You've got to go back to San Francisco.' Now Sadie says—get this now, this is the new curtain speech. Sadie says:

"'Straight orders from your private heaven, eh? Ah, no, Rev. Davidson, your God and me could never be shipmates, and the next time you talk to him'—here she steps up to the minister and shouts in his face—'You tell him this for me—Sadie Thompson is on her way to hell!'

"Davidson shouts back at her—'Stop! This has gone far enough!'

"Sadie—she's in wild hysteria now—retorts, 'No! It hasn't gone far enough! You've been telling me what's wrong with me. Now I'll tell you what's wrong with you. You keep yelling at me—"Be punished! Go back and suffer!" How do you know what I have suffered? You don't know. You don't care. You don't even ask. And you call yourself a Christian! You're nothing but a miserable witch burner. That's what you are. You believe in torture. You know you're big and strong, and you've got the law on your side—and the power to hang me. All right! But I want to tell you this. I've got the power to stand here

and say to you—Hang me, and be god-damned to you.'"

Jeanne threw her arms around Sam Forrest.

"Wonderful!" she cried. "Then I go sobbing to my room, and Davidson stands looking at me, his lips moving in prayer, and the curtain falls."

"But it's a tour de force," said Colton.

"A tour de force? Sure, it's a tour de force. But we need a tour de force right there, and this is the tour de force we need."

But it took more than this curtain speech to appease the faction determined on junking the play. It took all Jeanne's superb courage, all her diplomacy, all her coaxing—and nobody could coax as she could—all the arguments her bright mind could muster.

No business man wants to shell out thousands of dollars to bring a ghastly flop to Broadway.

But Jeanne did more than bring the two factions together, she gave the play all the treasures of her experience, bits of stuff out of her own life, glimpses of her own philosophy, lines that had sung in her brain for years. She was like a bird patching a nest, putting a piece of straw here, a string there, stuffing a bill full of soft mud into a crevice, molding the whole with her body, smoothing it, dressing it, making it fit.

"You got a corn-belt baby stare that screams," she says. Is that line Colton's? Or is it Eagels'? "I came from Kansas once myself—as fast as I could hoof it." Whose line is that? "A guy out there gave me the

dirtiest look!" That line she stole from Clifton Webb who had always won a laugh with it—stole it and flew with it up to her nest.

Read this, by George C. Warren, dramatic editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle,* discussing Jeanne Eagels in "Rain."

"She neglects nothing that adds a light by which to judge Sadie—that tender little bit on the old sofa that brings memories of her home in Kansas, for instance. How lovingly she fingers the woodwork, as she perhaps had done hundreds of times as a child, and all the while she is talking flippantly to a crowd of men around her, trying to make an impression.

"A shallow creature, this Sadie, untaught, hard from the knocks she has received at the hands of the world, a good deal of a child for all her worldly wisdom, hating men for their treatment of her, but using them to get such pleasure out of life as it holds for her, impudent and loose of tongue, an enticing little devil, choice enough to tempt even the anchorite, Rev. Davidson. Miss Eagels makes her all these things, and adds her own vibrant subtly feminine personality to make a magnificent creation of this wanton from the purlieus of Honolulu."

When Jeanne had finished her work she coaxed the antagonistic faction to come and watch a rehearsal. And so the play opened in New York, and was a smashing hit from the start.

It played in the Maxine Elliott Theatre. It seemed

the height of irony to Jeanne that she should achieve stellar honors in a theatre named after the woman she hated most, the woman she blamed for the smash-up of her life. Yet she named her pet dog Maxine. "Not for the woman," she used to say, "but for the theatre." The dog was given to Zoe Akins after Jeanne died. Jeanne's mother brought it to Zoe before she left for the funeral, saying, "Jeanne wanted you to have it."

The theatre was packed to the doors that first night. Hundreds of people who could not get seats were eager to stand back of the railing behind the last row of seats in the orchestra, and even in the balcony.

Every important theatrical man and woman who could come, was present. One might hear them all during the first intermission, telling what they thought:

"She's marvelous. She's wonderful. But if I were playing that part, I would have ——" "I never saw anything like it. I hope she chokes." "It's a glorious performance, damn her!" "She's so good I could kill her!" "A new star rises on Broadway—God forbid!" These were the actors and actresses talking. The others talked with adjectives, and clapped until their hands were sore. Not in the memory of this generation had there been such wild enthusiasm for a character in a play.

And when the curtain fell, after Sadie's last line—"I'm sorry for everybody in the world! Life's a quaint present from Somebody, there's no doubt about that. Maybe it will be easier in Sydney"—hundreds of peo-

ple got out of their seats and started toward the stage, as though they would take the new star in their arms and hug and kiss her and cry over her.

Weeks after the body of Jeanne Eagels had been lowered into its grave under the pine trees on the hillside in "that slow little town," somebody wrote this beautiful tribute to her:

"Many a blue moon shall dip in the skies ere we forget that last act in 'Rain' when Jeanne Eagels as Sadie Thompson stood alone and forlorn, looking out at the placid sea. Hungry for an honest man's love, sickened with the shams and hypocrisies of the minister who had attempted to assault her, condemned by everyone—she stood there in the deserted trading post and pondered on the foibles of life and the hurts of fate. 'It will be easier in Sydney,' she says, 'it will be easier.'

"Jeanne Eagels died in the glamor of her success. It was not for her to see youth slipping away. It was not for her to experience the sickening realization that she was too old, and that she would have to give way to youth. That is the Gethsemane in the lives of most successful theatricals.

"So perhaps it was for the best. She had sipped at the cup of life, she had known the thrill of international fame, and she had died in the zenith of her triumph. But we cannot suppress a sigh at her passing, and we shall never think of Jeanne Eagels without recalling that last scene in the drama she made famous.

She was such a pathetic little figure as she stood there in her tawdry costume. And yet she was no less pathetic when her eyes closed on the joys and afflictions of earth. God grant 'it will be easier' for her in that distant sphere that lies beyond the outer fringe of what we call life for want of a better name."

Who wrote that? Somebody in *Jim Jam Jems.*

II

"Rain" opened in New York on the night of Nov. 8, 1922, with the following cast:

A Native girl—Kathryne Kennedy.

A Native Policeman—Chief Whitehawk.

Native boys—Oka Bunda—Llano Paulo.

Ameena, wife of Joe Horn—Emma Wilcox.

Private Griggs, U. S. M. C.—Kent Thurber.

Corporal Hodgson, U. S. M. C.—Harold Healy.

Sergt. O'Hara, U. S. M. C.—"Handsome"—Robert Elliott.

Joe Horn, trader of Pago Pago—Rapley Holmes.

Dr. MacPhail—Fritz Williams.

Mrs. MacPhail—Shirley King.

Quartermaster Bates of the S. S. *Orduna*—Harry Quealy.

Mrs. Davidson—Catherine Brook.

Rev. Alfred Davidson—Robert Kelly.

Sadie Thompson—Jeanne Eagels.

It ran for five years, in New York and on the road.

It was made into a moving picture called "Sadie Thompson" in which Gloria Swanson made a big success. And some day, perhaps, it will be a talkie.

Before the curtain ascended on the first act, an incident occurred back-stage that admirably illustrates Jeanne's greatest fault, and her greatest virtue.

She was looking for the rosary her mother had sent, and she was frantic. The curtain should have gone up ten minutes ago, but Jeanne wasn't going to let it rise until she found her beads. In the midst of the excitement, Kent Thurber started across her path. Jeanne collided with him.

"Get out of my way, you son of a ——" she cried, her face livid with sudden fury, and brushed by him.

Later in the evening Thurber went to her dressing room.

"Perhaps I shouldn't talk to you now," he said, "but I can't help it. I've been thinking over what you called me, and I can't stand it. You and I both have run-of-the-play contracts, and it looks as if we'd be in this show for a long time, and unless we have an understanding now we aren't going to get along. I want you to take back the name you called me."

Jeanne was astounded. She did not remember calling Thurber any name; didn't recall telling him to get out of her way, didn't recollect that she had even seen him before the curtain rose.

"I can't believe I called you anything of the kind," she said. "I've never said the word until we began

rehearsing for this play. I surely didn't mean to. And if I did, I'm sorry. I'm really sorry."

She offered her hand, and Thurber took it.

It was one of the few times Jeanne made apology for anything she had done, one of the few times she felt she could apologize without being insulted.

Hers was the sort of mind that argues, "No, no, I can't tell him I am sorry. I'd like to go to him and get down on my knees and ask his pardon. But he'd laugh at me. He'd insult me. And there would be people around to hear. Maybe if I send him a gift, something real good, he'll know how sorry I am, without my saying so."

Other women offended, and forgot the offence with "I'm so sorry—can you ever forgive me?" Jeanne offended and did not forget, and no one suffered as she did because of something she had done to a man or a woman she admired.

During the evening Jeanne's dressing room—furnished with green wicker, yellow hangings, and Chinese decorations—was filled with flowers sent by dozens of Broadway stars, who hoped, perhaps, they would convey sympathy, and not congratulations.

Between acts women came into her dressing room, women who envied and hated her, and told her how exquisite she was, how true, how great. They invited her to their homes, their clubs, the intimacy of their private parties.

And after it was all over, the thunders of applause,

the adulation of the visitors, the ardent thanks of Sam Harris and Sam Forrest and Jack Colton, the noisy admiration of the "Rain" crew and the stage hands, and the congratulations from members of the cast, Jeanne stepped out of Sadie's clothes, freed her golden hair, put on a bathrobe, and sat down to rest.

The doctor and the nurse who had sprayed her nose and throat before she went on, and who had stood in the wings all during the play, had gone with the electricians and the scene shifters and the rain-makers. Only Mama Froggy remained with Jeanne backstage.

"I've been invited to three parties tonight," Jeanne said. "But I'm so tired! I can hardly lift my hand to wipe the grease paint off my face."

She was silent for a long time, thinking—it may be—of a little girl who daubed her face with makeup to give the impression that she was an actress—or of a girl of fifteen on the first night she played Pauline Westerley's rôle in "Pickings from Puck," or of the young actress playing in "The Great Pursuit" whom Marie Tempest and David Warfield kissed, or of the latest Belasco "find" who stopped the show in "Daddies." Perhaps she thought of Chadbourne too, and what he once had meant to her.

She was 32 years old now, and success had come to her at last. No more would people call her "the patsy of New York" or "the Bernhardt of the sticks." The house was ringing yet with the applause of a great

audience. She was a star. She was the greatest actress in the world, and she had proved it. She had reached the heights. What else was there to do? All her ambitions had been satisfied. Every wish of her heart had been granted. All her dreams of glory had come true.

She should have been happy? Perhaps.

She put her hand on Mama Froggy's shoulder and smiled wistfully.

"I don't want anyone in the world tonight but you!" she said.

They had chicken à la king in an obscure up-town restaurant, rode through Central Park for a time, and said good-bye. Jeanne went to the room she had rented a few days before. It still smelled of fresh paint. The dogs barked joyously when she let herself in. She closed the door, locked it, took off her hat, and fell across the bed.

Mama Froggy found her thus when she called the next morning.

They breakfasted together, and called a taxi to take them past the Maxine Elliott Theatre. As they passed it they saw a number of men putting up new bulbs in the theatre marquee, bulbs spelling out the words, "Jeanne Eagels in 'Rain.'" Jeanne wanted to stop and watch them. But she was afraid someone might see her, and discover she was not so blasé about seeing her name in lights, as she pretended.

"You go into the theatre, Mama Froggy," Jeanne said, "and ask for letters. Then we can both have an

excuse for staying around and watching my name go up."

Madame Savage got the mail and came out. She stood on the sidewalk a long time before she reëntered the cab. But even then the men had not finished their work.

"Go around the block a couple of times," Jeanne told the taxi driver. "And take it easy. We're in no hurry."

There it was at last, the taxi crawling by it, the sign that told all Broadway that Jeanne Eagels was at last a star. Jeanne wished it were night, so the lights might flash that name of hers in the faces of all who walked the street.

"Let's go home now," she said. "But first we must stop at a jeweler's."

"A jeweler's? Jeanne Eagels, you are not going to be extravagant now—just to celebrate?"

"No. But I must buy some diamond cuff links for Kent Thurber. He says I insulted him last night. Perhaps I did. I don't remember. But he'll like the cuff links, don't you think?"

III

Jeanne Eagels never smoked until she began to rehearse for "Rain." She didn't drink whisky, and she seldom got drunk, until after she married Ted Coy.

She met Coy—and Whitney Warren Jr.—while she

was playing " Rain." And a set of almost unbelievable incidents built themselves around her and her relations with these two men.

Ted Coy was married and the father of two sons when Jeanne first saw him; and his wife, the former Sophie D'Antignac Meldrim, the daughter of Judge Peter W. Meldrim, one of the most distinguished lawyers of Savannah, Ga., and at one time president of the American Bar Association, wanted a divorce.

Ted—Edward Harris Coy—was a Yale graduate, the son of wealthy parents, a young man in Wall Street with a brilliant future, and the greatest football player of his generation. Walter Eckersall of the *Chicago Tribune,* the foremost authority on the game, called him the greatest football player of all time.

He was tall and strong and swift. He was a plunging full back, a line bucker, a punter, a drop-kicker, a fast runner, the kind of man that other men make into legends. He defeated Princeton twice, all by himself, they said of him. And once, not quite recovered from an appendicitis operation, he went into a game to risk his life for dear old Yale. The stitches had not yet been taken from the wound, men said, and during the stress of the play they burst. Coy had the ball and was running with it down the field, his entrails crowding through the hole in his side, and all the opposing players hanging on his shoulders and his middle and his legs.

He had the ball and he was holding it close to his

bleeding side, pressing it hard against his wound to keep his insides from protruding further; and he was running, pulling the team with him, a giant covered with lesser men, desperate men who could not stop him, who could only slow his stride. He staggered, but he did not stop. He made the touch-down Yale needed to win, and grinned as he fell across the line.

Oh, in his way, and in his day, Ted Coy was as great a legend as Jeanne Eagels was to be.

He was handsome and clean-looking and world-famous, and scores of women proposed to him after his last game. He went to Savannah in 1913, and umpired a game, wearing the big white sweater with the blue Y, and met Sophie Meldrim, and ran away with her to Asheville, N. C.

Alas, that college athletes must leave college some day! Alas, that football glory fades as quickly as all other kinds! Alas, that romance gives way to the demands of everyday routine!

Ted Coy, though a member of the firm of Davies, Thomas & Co., brokers, still lived his college days. He was still living them when he married Sophie Meldrim, and when he married Jeanne Eagels. And he is living them now with his third wife who was Lottie Bruhn of El Paso, Tex.

Life sometimes destroys a man by making him a legend.

Whitney Warren Jr. was another type of man. He is the son of the famous architect who planned the

Louvain library in Belgium. He is a member of the Knickerbocker and the Racquet and Tennis clubs. He was a war hero. He left Groton to enlist in the French army, and won the Medaille Militaire, the highest decoration a soldier of France can win, and the Croix de Guerre.

He had been engaged to Miss Geraldine Miller Graham, a California heiress whom the Prince of Wales called "the most beautiful and charming girl in America," but the engagement was dissolved by "mutual consent."

Sometimes Whitney Warren stood in the wings, watching Jeanne, and Ted Coy stood in the wings on the other side of the stage, watching Jeanne and Warren. Frequently the people back-stage worried, fearing that Coy and Warren might get into a fight. They were seldom left together. Sometimes Jeanne would worry too, and order both of them put out of the theatre. Sometimes Whitney Warren brought a number of his college friends back-stage.

Jeanne's dressing room windows opened on an alley, and she was startled one winter night by someone's tapping on the pane.

"There's a man trying to get into my room," she informed the "Rain" crew, and they hurried into the alley and found young Warren. They brought him in, and Jeanne asked him what he was trying to do.

"You had me shoved out into the cold," said Warren, "because some of my friends were making a noise.

They shoved me out, all right, and no mistake about it. They wouldn't let me get my coat and hat out of your room either. And I had the keys of my car in my coat. The car's parked down the block, but I can't get in it without the key. So I've been waiting in the alley for over an hour for a chance to get my coat. And, if you must know, I've come pretty damn close to freezing myself to death."

Jeanne laughed at him, and warned him to leave his college pals at home whenever he came back-stage again.

The first strange incident that rose out of Jeanne's friendship—or love—for these two men, came with the published announcement of Jeanne's engagement to Whitney Warren. And the second developed about the time Mrs. Coy won her divorce from Ted.

"Never deny. Never explain. Never rush into print. Let them think anything they like, say anything they like. Say nothing—and become a legend."

Whitney's mother denounced the story as a malicious lie. Her son would never marry an actress. Whitney's father thundered denials too, threatened to disinherit his son, and sent him out of the country.

Jeanne's friends questioned her. Newspaper men besieged her. She had nothing to say. It was embarrassing, but she would not defend herself nor explain herself. She did not see Whitney again until after she had married and divorced Ted Coy.

It was in San Francisco. Jeanne arrived on the Ad-

miral Liner, *H. F. Alexander,* from Seattle, and found Warren on the pier.

"Jeanne!" he cried, and held his arms open.

She rushed into them, crying, "Whitney, my dear!" and kissed him, with all the world—represented by the newspaper men—looking on. She sent her manager, her maid, and her baggage to her hotel; and motored with Whitney to Del Monte for dinner.

There was talk then that she would marry Whitney Warren. Jeanne talked of it to friends in New York months later, debating the wisdom of it. Perhaps she planned to marry him. Perhaps her only joy was in the planning.

The second coincidence, which involved Jeanne and Ted Coy and Sophie Meldrim Coy, and others, came near to smirching her name, and ruining her career.

XI

WHILE Jeanne was dividing her attentions between Ted Coy and Whitney Warren Jr., she met another man she liked. He, like Coy, was a famous athlete, and married. And his wife was seeking a divorce.

Jeanne met him in a Park Avenue hotel restaurant. He was sitting at a table next to her, with a beautiful brunette Jeanne knew slightly. Jeanne was alone. She saw the man's wife enter the dining room, saw her look closely at the diners, saw the grim look that settled on her face when she discovered her husband and his friend, and watched her as she bore down upon the unsuspecting pair.

The woman made a scene and threatened to name the beauty as co-respondent. When she had gone, Jeanne sent her card to the brunette, expressing her sympathy and asking what she could do to help. The beauty introduced her escort, and the three ordered fresh coffee and made plans for the defence.

"I like you," Jeanne told the man. "I liked the way you treated your wife. Another man might have hit her. And I hated the way she treated you. It was a sordid business, but I think you handled it well."

It was not long before this man was calling at the theatre to talk about his domestic affairs—and other things. Several times Jeanne invited him to her room

—then arranged with draperies falling from the middle of the ceiling to form a sort of oriental tent.

She would give him a drink or two, and a bit of advice, and listen to tales of his athletic prowess. It was all very nice until Jeanne discovered that the window across the street hid a couple of detectives. She happened to see one of them peering through a spy glass into her room.

"It's me your wife will name," Jeanne said. "My name will be in all the papers. Jeanne Eagels, the greatest actress in the world, caught like a rat, framed, innocent—but try to prove it. An actress's virtue? What a laugh to the common herd! There will be nasty stories. They will kill Sadie Thompson. They will close the theatre. They'll throw my whole company out of work, and cost Sam Harris a million dollars, or more. All my fault. I never should have brought you to my room. I should have remembered your wife wants a divorce, and will go to any means to get it."

"Let her get the divorce," the man cried. "Then you can marry me."

Jeanne laughed derisively; but derision changed to despair.

"Go!" she cried. "Go at once. Here's your hat. Here's your coat. Here's your stick. Don't forget anything."

As soon as he left Jeanne dashed to the phone and called her press agent, George Holland.

"George," she said. "You must come to my room immediately. I'm in great danger. Possibly you can save me."

Holland was young, but shrewd. He had been a newspaper reporter before he became a press agent. He had worked in New York. He had friends on every newspaper. Jeanne believed he could keep her name out of the papers, even if she were named in a divorce suit.

Holland was alarmed.

"You can't keep that story out of the papers," he said. "A million dollars wouldn't do it, nor ten million. If that story ever breaks, it will be plastered over the front page of every paper in New York—even the *Times*. A famous athlete, his society wife, and the greatest actress in the world, all tied up in a scandal—with Ted Coy and Whitney Warren Jr. in the background. No, Jeanne, if that woman names you, it's good-night! The story will go around the world! Why is she so eager for a divorce?"

"Because she wants to marry again, of course," said Jeanne.

Holland gave a whoop.

"Great! That'll save us. Who is it she wants to marry?"

"I don't know—but a woman who wants a divorce as badly as she does, must have someone in mind."

"Then let's get detectives of our own, and find out who he is. Probably he's somebody big, and he won't

want to be named in the affair any more than you do. We'll go to him, and make him listen to reason."

Jeanne's detectives went to work within the hour—to discover that a corps of reporters had already heard something of the athlete's domestic troubles, and were working on the story. Detectives and reporters found the truth without much difficulty.

The athlete's wife was already the mistress of the man she wanted to marry, and the man was a powerful and colorful figure, a banker, a financier known throughout the world.

Detectives and reporters obtained all the evidence they needed; and despite all that Holland or Jeanne could do, one of the greatest scandal stories of Broadway took shape in the composing room of a tabloid newspaper.

The story was in type. The picture layouts had been made, and the editor was jubilantly figuring up all the extra papers the story would sell, when he thought it might be advisable to call the owner of the paper " and put him to bed with a grin."

" It's the greatest yarn that ever was beaten into type," he told the owner. " Sometime ago we had the story of Jeanne Eagels' engagement to Whitney Warren Jr. and all the row that raised in the Warren family. Then we had the rumor that Mrs. Ted Coy was going to divorce her husband, and that Ted was to marry Jeanne. Now it turns out that ——— ——— is the man in the case. His wife is going to bring

Jeanne Eagels in a scene from
HER CARDBOARD LOVER

suit, naming Eagels. Why? Here's the reason. Because she's living with ——— ———, the Wall Street crœsus, and wants to marry him. Ain't that a beaut? A great actress, two famous athletes, a war hero son of a millionaire, two society women, and a Wall Street giant all mixed up in a story of hearts and flowers. We've got the goods. There isn't a libel in a word of it, and I'm spilling the story over pages 2, 4, 5, and 6, with a picture of Eagels and the wife on page 1, other pictures in the double truck, and half-column cuts in the story."

The editor waited for some comment. There was none.

"We'll be on the street with it in fifteen minutes," he went on. "Shall I send you a boy with the first copy?"

"You'll do nothing of the kind," the owner said. "I want you to kill the story. And kill it godalmighty dead. I don't know this Wall Street man, but I know he's been square with everybody. Do you want to start a panic?"

The type that might have ruined Jeanne—and others—was thrown into the hell-box, to be melted and remade into type that would ruin somebody else. The woman so eager for divorce went to Paris and secured it there, on the grounds of desertion. The man she wanted did not marry her. He died a few years later and left her a few thousand dollars.

Jeanne, reading that the divorce had been granted,

read soon after that Mrs. Sophie Meldrim Coy had also been granted a divorce that day in Paris, on the grounds of desertion. She was awarded the custody of the two children, Edward Jr., and Peter Meldrim Coy.

Ted Coy was free, and Jeanne felt she might be happy as his wife. It was a sad mistake.

II

The grand manner came to Jeanne Eagels with the mantle of success—as it comes to so many women of the theatre. But grand and aloof as she might be, she never quite reached the absurdities scaled by some, where she could say, " Don't dare speak to me unless I first speak to you," and mean it.

She could be imperious and rude, and often was; yet she could make herself the pal of stage hands and taxi drivers and bell-hops and hotel clerks, and often did.

One night after the play she watched a crap game back-stage. Some members of the company, George Holland, a number of stage hands, and an important nabob from the money belt, were handling the dice, and the butter and egg man was winning all the money because he had an unlimited capital, as compared with the very limited bank rolls of the others. He wanted to " fade $100 " every time the cubes rolled, and Jeanne didn't think it fair.

"George," she said to Holland, "did I give you my salary?"

She always gave her pay envelope to someone to keep for her until the bank opened the next day. Holland produced the envelope and handed it to her. Jeanne took out one bill and dropped it in front of the "big gambler."

"Shoot a grand," she said. "One flop of the dice, and high man wins. Let's see whether or not you really want to gamble."

The nabob went out hurriedly, and never returned.

One usually found Jeanne fair.

An actor appeared at the theatre drunk, and Jeanne demanded that Forrest fire him.

"I cannot tolerate drunkenness," she said. "My actors cannot drink and give first class performances. And they must give their best every night or I won't have them. Fire him! Fire him right away."

She was a queen crying, "Off with his head," but Forrest smiled to himself. Forrest knew his Eagels.

"Look here," he said to the offender, "you've been drinking pretty heavily, and it's interfering with your art—so-called. Miss Eagels can't stand for that, but if you promise to behave I know she'll give you another chance."

"For God's sake tell her I'll be good," the actor said. "If I'm fired I'll have a hell of a time finding another job. It might ruin my whole career. Who wants to hire an actor canned for getting drunk and

blowing up in his lines? Tell her anything. Promise her anything. You won't regret it, Sam."

Forrest went back to Jeanne with virtue written on his brow.

"Well, I gave him the gate," he said. "Of course it will ruin his career, but he brought it on himself."

"What do you mean, you gave him the gate?" Jeanne asked, her smile changing instantly into rage. "You fired him? You dared to do that?"

Sam's smile brought back recollection to her.

"Oh, I didn't really want him fired," she wailed. "You knew that. Sam, this is terrible. Go back and hire him again. I just wanted you to warn him. Hire him back, and scare hell out of him. He's a fine actor when he's sober, and I know he'll be sober from now on."

Her grand manner was not with her when she bought her mother a house in Kansas City. She was then just a daughter who finds she has at last enough money to make her mother happy. She sent her mother to Los Angeles, eventually, and bought her a house there too. She brought her to New York whenever she wanted to come, phoned her twice a week no matter where she might be, and established charge accounts for her in many stores. The grand manner was never noticed when she gave money to those who needed it.

When Jeanne began to play in "Rain" she received $350 a week. This was soon boosted to $500, then to

$600, and then to $1,000. When the play ended she was getting $3,500 a week, and a percentage of the profits. "Rain" made $2,000,000 for its owners.

"You ought to save some of your money, Jeanne," Forrest kept saying. But it wasn't in Jeanne to save. The little girl who bought gum rather than candy because gum was "savin'er," had grown into a woman who didn't realize the value of money and who treated it with contempt.

Harris was greatly concerned that Jeanne was so improvident, so irresponsible, and predicted that unless she appointed a guardian for herself she would die in the poorhouse. Jeanne politely refused the guardian. It didn't matter whether she died poor or not, she said, so long as she "lived" before she died. But she did want to leave her mother enough to keep her in luxury for the rest of her life.

"Then you'll take out an insurance policy for $100,000," said Sam, "and I'll take $500 out of your salary every week, or whatever it takes, to pay the premiums." Jeanne had already bought $10,000 worth of insurance, and named her mother as the sole beneficiary. She managed to pass the doctor's examination, and the policy was changed to read $110,000. Jeanne was elated. She told all her friends, and bragged about her insurance deal as though it were a master stroke of finance she had thought up all herself.

As soon as the big money came her way Jeanne began to buy jewelry and clothes and automobiles—es-

pecially automobiles. She would run a car for a week or two, then trade it in for a new one, or give it away for no better reason than "I don't think it's exactly the type that suits me." Today you would see her in a Packard, and learn that she had traded in her new Minerva for it. Tomorrow you might see her step out of a Rolls-Royce, and she would talk about the Cadillac Sedan, or the Hispano-Suiza she ought to have.

She was in a Rolls-Royce when Louis Calhern saw her last. Calhern, one of the best known leading men in America, came out of a doctor's office in Park Avenue, to see the chauffeur of a Rolls-Royce jamming the front bumper of the car against the back of Calhern's parked auto. He would give Calhern's car a shove, back up, and give it another shove.

"Maybe you can explain," Calhern said, wresting the chauffeur from the cushioned splendor of the Rolls. "Why are you trying to wreck my car?"

Jeanne stepped onto the sidewalk.

"Mr. Calhern," she said, "will you put that chauffeur down on the sidewalk where he won't be hurt? If you please. Thank you. I told him to shove your car out of the way, so I could have room to park. You don't mind, I'm sure. Have dinner with me one night, you and Mrs. Calhern. Do! Good day!"

H. R. H., The Prince of Wales came to see Jeanne Eagels when she played Sadie in the Maxine Elliott Theatre, and inasmuch as he wanted to avoid notoriety he had himself sneaked into a box after the house was

darkened. He enjoyed the play, and nobody recognized him because he left his seat just before the lights went on. After the play he went back-stage to congratulate the star.

"I never saw so fine a characterization in my life," he said. "Do you think you could do it in London sometime?"

"I'd love to!" Jeanne replied.

They chatted for an hour before the prince left—and Jeanne fought with everybody back-stage to keep the newspapers from learning of his visit. George Holland, though, felt he owed it to Sam Harris to get all the publicity he could. He called the papers; but at Jeanne's request he did keep the secret of the prince's visit to Jeanne's dressing room.

Jeanne liked His Royal Highness.

"They tell me he's not such a hot lover," she would say. "Maybe he isn't. He doesn't have to be, and that's the pity of it. But it would be kind of cute to hold him in your arms and bite the tip of his ear, wouldn't it?"

In 1924 Jeanne went to London, but not to see the prince.

The Actors' Equity members had risen against the theatrical managers, and closed the theatres. Jeanne didn't belong to Equity at that time, and didn't want to belong to it. She resented the fact that Equity had so much power, and swore she would sooner join the Hod Carriers' Union. She blamed John Emerson,

then Equity's president, for closing the theatres, and spoke with bitterness of his "autocratic methods."

"I'm going to Russia or some place where personal liberty isn't just a name or a mockery, and there is no Equity," she said as she boarded the *Berengaria*. John Emerson was on the ship, and Jeanne promised the reporters she would tell him exactly what she thought of Equity.

It was a pleasant voyage, and everybody was happy. Lowell Sherman was aboard, and Gilbert Miller, and Jeanne spent much time with them, and Emerson, drinking and laughing and talking about Equity. Sherman would order cocktails to be set in a line the length of the bar. Then he would invite his friends to come and drink their way down the row. "You drink up to here," he'd say, "and you this far, and you to this glass, and me—I'll finish the parade."

Jeanne drank, perhaps more freely than she ever had, and toasted the destruction of Equity. She was going abroad merely for pleasure, but to tease and annoy the president of the Equity, she led him to believe she was to play "Rain" in London.

Jeanne didn't stay long in England. The customs men at Southampton were outrageously rude to her, she complained. They wanted to know whether she came on pleasure, as her passport indicated, or whether she had come to take the bread out of some starving British actress's mouth. Jeanne, with Emerson at her elbow, refused to answer, and became hysterical in her wrath.

She was allowed to proceed to London, but her anger, and the humiliation to which she had been subjected, made her ill. Early the next morning, the King's equerries waited on her, presenting the profound apologies and regrets of the Crown, and assuring her she was but too welcome.

She might stay in England the rest of her life if she wished, and become the foremost actress of the British Isles. That made Jeanne well. But though she might believe she had a "heavy drag with the Crown," she wasn't going to take advantage of it. She thanked the king's equerries, sent her regards to the royal pair, and H. R. H., and took the first boat home.

III

Ted Coy loved Jeanne Eagels devotedly, and she may have loved him as she claimed, though that is doubtful. But their marriage—which occurred in August, 1925, at the home of Fay Bainter in Bay Ridge, Conn.—was a catastrophe for both.

They had little in common. Ted lived in the past; Jeanne in the present and the future. Ted was broke. He had given his first wife everything he owned. Jeanne had all the money in the family.

Ted wanted to be Jeanne's manager, and she wouldn't permit that. He argued that if he could honestly say he was his wife's manager he could prove to his friends that she was not supporting him.

"It would come to the same thing," Jeanne answered. "Don't kid yourself. Besides nobody is ever going to manage me but myself."

Ted loved his wife so much he would rather lose his self-respect and the respect of his friends than lose her, even for a day. He could not work in New York when she was on tour. And he put up with insults, public and private, to be with her. He let her humiliate and nag him, and never complained. Even at her own table and before her friends Jeanne would shame him. He would flinch but bear it silently.

He was too much the gentleman, too much the lover. He had no chance for happiness with Jeanne.

Jeanne was proud of him—at first. He was so handsome, so willing to be her slave, such a really big man in his own world. Sports writers were always hunting him up and asking his opinion of football stars and football coaches, and now and then they mentioned him in print.

"I'm feeling pretty cocky today," Jeanne told an interviewer at the time of Lindbergh's flight to Paris. "Two editorial writers this week said Lindbergh—isn't he a darling?—typified America to the world today, just as two other Americans have done in the past. One of those two, the papers said, was Abraham Lincoln. The other is my husband, Ted Coy."

Coy had never known an actress until he met Jeanne Eagels. He didn't know what to say to Jeanne's friends. They were all actors or actresses, or theatrical

managers or producers, or playwrights or critics or press agents. They talked a lingo he didn't understand. He felt himself an outsider. How could he interrupt an actor describing how great he was in his last play, to say, "Now, in that last Princeton game——" Theatrical people bored him, and puzzled him, and when he got a chance to escape from them, if only to run an errand for Jeanne, he seized it gladly.

Jeanne dominated him from the start, and despised him because he let her. She despised him, too, because he could not control her drinking. She didn't care particularly to drink. But he begged her not to drink. Therefore she drank to spite him. And his way of correcting her was to drink with her, drink more than she could, and let her see what a person really drunk may look like.

If Jeanne could have inflamed Ted into some show of resistance, she might have saved him and herself. But she could not. She would slap him—and people all over the room would hear the thwack of her palm upon his cheek and see the imprint of her hand stand out on his reddened face. Ted would grit his teeth and steel his tongue to gentleness.

"You must be very tired, dear. You are not yourself. I'm sorry."

He was always sorry. Poor Ted! Poor Jeanne!

But Ted was useful to Jeanne in many ways. He looked after her personal affairs—especially her bills—corresponded with her creditors, paid some of them,

compromised with others, saw that no bill was paid twice, and tried to collect some of the thousands of dollars owed to her.

He induced her to buy the 29 acre farm in Briar Cliff Hills, near Ossining, N. Y., and, even when he was with her on the road, managed to take care of it with the utmost economy.

There were two houses on the estate. One was built of stone. It was in this house that Ted and Jeanne lived, and entertained Jeanne's friends over the week-ends. It contained an immense room, a garage that had been converted into a ballroom. The other house was frame, and sometimes Jeanne rented it to friends.

It was an easy ride from New York, and fourteen or fifteen people would pile into cars every Saturday night when Jeanne played in New York, and stay until Monday afternoon.

There were chickens, and cows, and dogs, and a horse, and two love birds known as Gallagher and Sheehan. The dogs were mostly police dogs and Schnauzers, but "Rain" was a white English bull, and Jeanne loved him so much she got him a mate called "Sunshine." "Rain" was a fighting dog, and it was no uncommon sight for Jeanne's guests to see him come limping home, covered with cuts. George, Jeanne's brother—who stayed on the farm during her absence—seemed always to be painting that dog with blue antiseptic stuff.

Minka, the prize of the lot, was a savage animal—

and Jeanne allowed few to go near him. George, the cook,—who bragged that he had been a chef on a river boat and was noted for his oyster stews, the quantity of them but not the quality—had a great admiration for this dog.

"That Minka," he used to say, "never goes out when it's lightning. He's so mean he knows God's going to strike him dead some day."

Minka obeyed commands in English, French and German. Once he worked with the New York police department.

It was this dog that Jeanne had with her in the Paramount studio on Long Island when she was making her last picture, "Jealousy." A newspaper man told a story about Jeanne and the dog that brought Jeanne much criticism.

"Jeanne Eagels," he said, "came out of her dressing room, and saw one of the stage hands talking to her dog. She was furious. She berated the man, and went to complain to his superiors. The following day this sign was posted in a conspicuous place in the studio:

"'Employes are not allowed to talk to Miss Eagels' dog.'"

Jeanne did not deny the story. She rather enjoyed it. Publicity that dealt with her "temperament" was always welcome. Monta Bell, head of the studio, explained that Jeanne was afraid that Minka might tear the man to pieces.

Jeanne always had excellent cooks, but sometimes she would spend hours in the kitchen, making a salad for her guests, or baking them a special dish. She expected them to eat it too. There have been occasions when she flew into a rage on being told, "Really, Jeanne dear, it's too tempting—but I'm on a diet." And in such rages she was likely to say, "Then go home, and don't come back."

Anything that upset Jeanne might bring on the fireworks. Someone would make a catty remark. A woman would appear in a dress identically like Jeanne's. Someone would happen to laugh at the wrong time. And the golden volcano would erupt and shoot lava all over the room. "Get out! Get out! All of you! Go on home! I can't stand you!"

One never knew when it was coming—and one used to Jeanne took it good-naturedly, making excuses. She was a sick woman, nothing but nerves, overworked, raw nerves. In a moment she would be filled with contrition, wanting to call them all back, and unable to bring herself to do it.

When they were gone she would go sit in a graveyard for hours, and brood, or hurry to the Algonquin Hotel in New York, and shut herself up for days. When she had recovered her amiable mood she would call up her guests of last week and invite them all for the next week-end. And they would be glad to come.

In winter there were sleighing parties—when there was snow—and a big toboggan slide. Those who didn't

care for outdoor sports might sit inside all day and all night, and read, or play bridge, or shoot craps, or drink. When the supply of liquor gave out there were plenty of speakeasies in Ossining to visit. Sometimes Jeanne drank with her guests. Sometimes she didn't.

Neighbors complained of her, to each other, of the noise her guests made, of the bills she owed. When they came to her she'd say, "All right. Sue me! Go on! Start suit! See my lawyer! Don't bother me!"

When "Rain" was playing out of town, both Jeanne and Ted wrote frequent letters to George, and received letters from him which usually enclosed bills—bills for dog-biscuit or coal or coke, bills for repairs on the houses, bills for the transplanting of trees.

There was always something to worry about, it seems. Now the hens weren't laying so many eggs, and the cows gave little milk, and the dogs were off their feed. "Rain" had been in another fight. "Minka" had eaten all the kennel rations. The hen house needed fixing. The hay wouldn't last through the winter, and straw was needed for bedding. The farm wagon had broken down. The wheels had just gone to pieces. The spokes were rotten. What about buying a new or a second hand wagon? The horse had been shod. It cost nine dollars. The electric light people had come again about the power bill. Something ought to be done about it.

Expenses were heavier when Jeanne lived on the farm. She was always buying new trees, planting new

flowers. She owed the nursery $1,200 for trees, and a collector rode over to try to collect.

Jeanne met him with a winning smile, and praised his horse. He was so charmed that he forgot all about the bill, and let her borrow the horse for Ted to use. Later Fay Bainter, who was living in the frame house, rode the horse for two months.

Coy couldn't always get money from Jeanne to pay her bills. She didn't have very much after paying the premiums on her life insurance, the installments on the estate, plus interest at six per cent., and sending money to her mother. She didn't have very much, and besides she needed ten or twelve pairs of shoes, and a few dresses, and perhaps another necklace. The bills would have to wait until next week, or the week after.

Jeanne made perhaps $2,000,000 in her life, but she could not hang onto any part of it. She made $250,000 in the market in three days, and dropped it all before the week was out. She bought jewels and lost them. She would put them away somewhere—so that she might not lose them—and usually she forgot where she had put them.

At Mabel Webb's home in Port Washington, Long Island, she left a diamond necklace with an emerald pendant. Mabel found it and called her.

"Oh, that," said Jeanne. "Yes, I remember now. I did leave it there. I'll come and get it some day—or you can give it to Clif to bring to me."

"But I'm worried, Jeanne. Suppose my house is

robbed, and your necklace is stolen—what will I do? Is it insured?"

Jeanne laughed at her. The insurance company had refused to insure her jewels.

"If you are robbed," she said, "that's my tough luck. I'll just have to buy me another."

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XII

JEANNE was made a star, and immediately she began to attract all sorts of people: flappers who thought it smart to be seen with her, young men who had an idea she might do them some good, old men with money, society women who needed attractions for their salons, charity workers who wanted alms, and rival actresses who wanted to show the world that they, too, recognized the new genius.

Prohibition had been in effect some years and was beginning to work out well. That is, the real "before-the-war" stuff was circulating freely, and the American public had learned how to make beer and gin. Jeanne couldn't go anywhere—and people demanded she go everywhere—without being flattered and coaxed into taking a cocktail or two. It was not until after she married that she began to drink whisky. It was not until after she married that she began to drink to excess.

She never drank until after the curtain had fallen on the last act. Then she would hurry into her dressing room, and find a little group of friends engaged in a serious debate as to the genuineness of the stuff they were drinking. Jeanne would wriggle out of her clothes, and there would be parties that lasted sometimes until long after dawn.

When Jeanne appeared at the theatre that evening she would be sober, though possibly very ill. The doctor would examine her, spray her nose and throat, and let her go on. She would go on, even when it appeared to the doctor that she must collapse before the first act was finished.

And she was so jealous of Sadie that she would not listen to talk of getting an understudy. She had made Sadie, and Sadie was hers, all hers. Nobody else had a right to play the rôle. Nobody could. And—if she had had her way—nobody else ever would.

She was playing in a Shubert theatre when the matter of an understudy came to a head. She was made up for the first act. The curtain was about to go up, and Sam Forrest was in her dressing room.

"You must have an understudy," he said. "It isn't possible for you to play every night. Look at yourself in the mirror. You're half dead now. There's nothing alive about you but that damn stubborn spirit that won't give in, even to common sense."

"I don't want an understudy."

"I know that. But we've got to have one for you. The contract with Shubert doesn't call for 'Jeanne Eagels in Rain.' It merely calls for 'Rain.' If anything happens to you we won't be able to fulfill our end of the contract."

Jeanne sprang up quickly and tore off her costume.

"I won't go on tonight," she said. "How do you like that?"

"All right, Jeanne," said Forrest gently. He went out and paced up and down before her door. He wasn't alarmed.

Stage hands watched him nervously. The curtain was supposed to go up in five minutes. Something had happened, they knew that, and it looked as though there wouldn't be any show.

As they watched, they saw Jeanne slide out of her door, once more dressed in her costume, and approach Sam Forrest.

"Sam, darling," they heard her say, "it's all right. Anything you do is all right. I couldn't let you down anyway. Maybe I am half dead—but I'll always be able to play Sadie Thompson."

Sam, and others, watched her play Sadie one night when she bled all over the stage. Wherever she walked she left a little trail of red. The doctor and the nurse wanted to drag her off the stage. Forrest, Holland, stage hands and "Rain" crew, watched her in amazement and horror.

"She's cut her leg somehow," Forrest said. "Good God, look at her!"

She was bleeding badly, but she was going through her part as though nothing had happened to her, speaking her lines with relish.

"Get sick? Never in my life. I'm so healthy that it hurts. Well, now that it's settled where I flop, let's all have a shot of hootch. I have some rye with me that's not long for this world. It's too good. Say,

Handsome, in that parcel you're resting on you'll find an object tied up in a red handkerchief. Bring it out."

She sang. She danced with the Marines to the tune of the Wabash Blues, and never winced, and never was out of character.

She almost fainted as she came off-stage, but she managed to grin as she explained:

"A safety pin got loose in my dance girdle and went looking for meat. It sank into my tum-tum quite a way. Can you yank it out, doc? We've only got a minute."

The doctor extracted the pin and cauterized the wound just in time for her to go on again.

The audience never knew that anything had happened to her.

That night, long after the theatre was dark, Jeanne was in a speakeasy and telling everyone about the money she was offered to endorse a certain brand of cigarettes.

"Imagine that," she cried. "Asking Jeanne Eagels to endorse a cigarette. One doesn't do these things, even for $5,000." Her voice carried to far tables.

Fanny Brice leaned close to Charley MacArthur.

"Shucks," she said, "for $50, I'd endorse an opium pipe."

Ted was with Jeanne of course. He seldom was anywhere else. He hated to see her dancing with other men, or talking to them alone at parties. He would walk up politely, ask, "Am I interfering?" and join

in the talk. He did this once at a party when Jeanne stood with her arms around MacArthur.

"Am I interfering?" he asked MacArthur. "Yes," said Charley, and turned back to Jeanne. "What were you saying, darling?" Coy—"and very Coy" he used to describe himself—walked slowly away.

Coy drank more heavily, perhaps, in Hollywood at the time Jeanne and John Gilbert were making the picture, "Man, Woman and Sin," than at any other place or period. He was afraid that Jeanne was falling in love with the handsome movie actor, and he would get John out of bed at night to inquire politely, if earnestly:

"Jack, are you sure there's nothing between you and Jeanne?"

There wasn't anything between them. Jeanne was crazy about Gilbert, and jealous of every woman who played with him—but Gilbert was unaware of this. He was quite smitten with another actress and Jeanne knew it.

In the last months of her life, when she was in such a condition that she didn't realize what she was saying, she made malicious remarks about many women, and especially the woman Gilbert knew.

She liked to tease Ted, and make him jealous. And if he dared to ask her questions, she replied as she replied to reporters, "My love affairs, my servants, and the food I eat are not public property."

She never went to night clubs or to public banquets.

She wouldn't make a speech, even in the theatre, and seldom autographed a photo. Ted, who wanted her to shine in public, couldn't understand this. That led to arguments. And arguments led to drink. And drink to further arguments.

Jeanne wanted to drink only with people she liked, people who knew why she drank, and who would protect her when she rolled under the table. She had a horror of being watched by strangers.

"Look at all the rats watching me," she said to Willard Mack in a restaurant where drinks were served. "Every one of them is waiting to see Jeanne Eagels take a drink. Damn them! And they'll go home and tell everybody they were out with 'Gin Eagels' last night, and she was drunk!"

II

Playing "Rain" in New York was glorious—despite the fact that every performance was a torture. Jeanne's arm, the one that was broken when she was a child, pained her every night because of the dampness. Tons and tons of rain fell every night on the stage. Every night her clothes were soaked. They were supposed to be.

You may remember how Sadie came rushing onto the verandah of Joe Horn's hotel, her skirts lifted above her head to protect her be-plumed hat, the quartermaster and others carrying her luggage—a battered

suitcase and a phonograph and other things wrapped up in shawls.

"Christ on the mountain top!" she said. "That was sudden. And me in the only decent togs I've got to my name. Put that stuff down anywhere, boys. Behold—the wreck of the Hesperus!" She took off her hat and looked mournfully at the plume. "H'm. That plume has waved its last. Farewell, pretty one, farewell. I guess any idea of me looking neat and chipper when I get to Apia is shot to pieces, eh what? Shi-cat-a-gani—that's what the Japs in Honolulu say when they mean 'I should worry.'"

Jeanne knew how her arm would hurt, but that never deterred her. It would have taken a regiment of Marines to keep her from playing. There were other things the matter with her, beside the arm. But she wasn't complaining. The play might aggravate her arm, and weaken her dangerously; but it was fascinating work, worthy of all sacrifices.

After the play there were parties, after the parties, bed. When she woke there were the papers—try to get a New York paper at breakfast "out in the sticks"—letters telling her she was wonderful, letters asking for money, bills, duns, "this bill is long past due and should be paid," advertisements, letters from friends, a letter from Edna, or from mother.

Breakfast came with the papers and the letters,—she never breakfasted in bed—orange juice and coffee and a bit of toast. As she breakfasted she read. After this

she would bathe, dress, and order her newest car. Perhaps she would go for a ride through the park, or drop in on Mabel Webb or Mama Froggy, or take someone to lunch, or go shopping. There were so many things one might do in New York between breakfast and theatre time.

On the road it was different. There were always a lot of petty annoyances in hotels and restaurants, and in the theatres she played. And the people she met were mostly strangers in whose company she could not be herself. It was only once in a while that she could enjoy drinking parties after the show. Reporters in each new town asked the same old questions. Newspapers all wanted to print pictures, not of Jeanne Eagels, but of Sadie Thompson. And Jeanne didn't care for that. She would give them pictures of herself in filmy tulle—and they'd dig up a picture of Sadie somehow, and print that. It seemed to her at times that newspaper men thought she had played Sadie all her life, and couldn't play anything else.

For five years she played "Rain," in New York and on the road. And she missed but eighteen performances on account of illness. Shortly before her marriage to Ted Coy she underwent an operation that kept her out of the theatre for a week. In Pittsburgh she missed three performances—and was docked three days' pay. She complained about this, and about the fact that the public was not told of her illness until after they had entered the theatre and the curtain was

about to go up. She felt that it was her name that had drawn these people to the theatre, and that therefore she was really entitled to be paid for the three performances.

In Pittsburgh she quarreled with Frank Gibbons, the manager who succeeded Forrest, and asked that he be discharged. He was arrogant, she said, and insolent; and he disobeyed her instructions.

She wanted Holland to come back with her, as her press representative; but Harris had other plans for Holland, his brother-in-law. Holland had spent two years with Jeanne, and when they parted, at Atlantic City, she gave him and his chum, Jimmy Whittaker, then the husband of Ina Claire, a banquet with champagne.

"It seems," she wrote, "there is something disagreeable and annoying constantly coming up between me and the Harris office to interfere with my peace of mind."

The road companies that played "Rain" in the lesser towns bothered her. Not only was she jealous of every actress who played "Rain," but she feared that they might injure her standing.

"These companies," she said, "have caused me no end of trouble. In a good many instances the censors have forced the players to change the original text, claiming it was immoral. In Newark I was requested to eliminate the most important scene of the play, 'the mountains of Nebraska,' because somewhere in Con-

necticut the second or third company had been forced to do so. I believe this action was due to the improper interpretation by a mediocre company."

She objected to the fact that Harris allowed a stock company to play "Rain" in Washington, during the inauguration week. And when she discovered that Clarence Jacobson of the President Theatre in that city was advertising the play by sending out post cards she was furious. The advertising matter on the cards read something like this:

"Dear Sir: If you get time some evening this week, I wish you would drop in at the President Theatre and see Sadie. She gets pretty bad, around 10:45 every night, drinking Scotch, playing around with Marines and trying to stand off a missionary who wants to convert her. Sadie is the star of 'Rain.' You've probably heard rumors as to what happened to the missionary when Sadie turned her only weapon—sex—against him. He's past all help by 10:45. (Shame overwhelms him.) But Sadie—I wish you'd try to see her this week. She's leaving Saturday night. The fee is only $1.50 for the first visit."

"It is with appalling regret," Jeanne wrote an editor concerning these post cards, "that I find anyone, however benighted, deeming such misrepresentation of 'Rain' necessary to attract people to his theatre. Not only is it misrepresentation, but it is also vandalism comparable to the gleeful debauchment of something beautiful by vulgar hands.

"To describe 'Rain' as salacious is to insult the intelligence of great preachers, great doctors, great students, great critics, great statesmen, great sociological workers, great craftsmen of all the arts, and great men and women of letters who have expressed their opinion that the play is in the nature of a moral evolution, containing elements of a hopeful new morality.

"To attempt to draw audiences to 'Rain' through the medium of such a post card is to me rather a terrible act. To suggest the lure of a lecherous exhibit for this play, is, to me, little short of criminal. To picture Sadie Thompson, the pathetic protagonist in this study in pity, as a beckoning red light to unclean minds is, to me, a horrific cheapening of one of the great characters in all drama.

"As one cradled in the theatre and consecrated to it, I bitterly protest against this defamation, and will thank you if you will print my protest."

Jeanne felt almost as badly about the second and third road companies as she did about the post cards, and so did "Rain's" author, John Colton.

"I feel much sicker for you than I do for myself," Colton wrote her, "for while you know that the play was my 'thought wish' out of Maugham, not everyone does. But everyone does know the beautiful and unearthly genius of Jeanne Eagels which gave a thousand new dimensions to a character which a base touch could so easily make half-caste and commonplace—perhaps even tawdry.

" ' Camille ' is what they called ' actor-proof '—until they saw Bernhardt. And ' Rain,' to my sorrow and frustration, seems only to be able to tickle the ears of the groundlings unless you play it. It's too bad. You made it too great. It can be no one's else.

" All the time I was thinking of you, sick and harassed, and now faced by this new and unexpected bit of unnecessary friction, and I felt so sorry. I recognize that you cannot play every hamlet and water tower in the country, but I have never been able to understand why these places could not be played after your first year of touring, by someone chosen intelligently, someone who was admittedly about to step into your shoes."

The road companies continued to play the little towns, and Jeanne played the cities.

One of the first cities she played on her tour was her home town, Kansas City.

III

Kansas City!

Jeanne had left it twenty years ago.

Then she was a chorus girl thrilled to think of traveling with such an outfit as the Dubinsky Brothers' Repertoire Company.

She had returned at last, the " greatest actress in the world," the star of " Rain."

She had visited the town many times during those

twenty years, but not since her days in "Grit, the Newsboy" had she played there.

Many a time, when she talked with Ruby Stepp, or Margaret Knowles, or Anna Mall, or Alma Cohen, or Thecla Tempelman, she had said: "Some day I will be the greatest actress in the world, and I will come to Kansas City and play for you."

Many a time she had told other girls whom she did not like: "I'll show you some day. Wait and see. Some day you'll stand in a line at the box office to buy tickets just to see me. And I hope you don't get in."

Some day had arrived now, and everybody in Kansas City realized it. The papers were full of Jeanne Eagels for weeks before she arrived. Great crowds waited at the depot to welcome her. Jeanne Eagels, a Kansas City girl, "who had made good," had come home. And the theatre in which she was to play was sold out for the two weeks of her stay.

Jeanne accepted her triumph as her due, but she was not happy, for her mother was ill—and the doctors wouldn't say she would get well. Jeanne wanted her mother to be present on the opening night. Her triumph would not be full without that.

She went from the depot to her mother's home, and found her dressed and waiting.

"Julie!" she cried. "I thought you were sick in bed."

"I was," said Julie. "But the minute I heard you were coming I began to feel better."

"Do the doctors know you're up?"

"Not yet, but they will. I'm going to see you play tonight."

"Julie, you'll do nothing of the kind. You'll go back to bed. I'm going to call the doctor right away, and a nurse. And they'll scold you good. Are you trying to break my heart?"

"I told the doctors I was going to see my daughter in 'Rain' this night, if I died for it. Call them if you want. I don't think they'll come. They've given me up for a silly, obstinate old woman."

Mrs. Eagles saw the play that night. A doctor sat on one side of her. A nurse sat on the other. She began to get well from that day.

She went to the theatre many nights in the two weeks that followed, and one night brought her three maiden sisters, Annie, Nell, and Sarah.

"They're almost like nuns," Mrs. Eagles describes them. "They would never think of going to such a show as 'Rain' if Jeanne hadn't been in it. Those three girls live an austere life. They know all about the life of Christ. They can argue any point of religion with you. But they never heard of Savoy and Brennan."

Annie rose to her feet during the middle of the second act, and, carried away with enthusiasm and admiration, cried out, "Jeanne, you're wonderful!" She almost stopped the show. After the performance Jeanne took her aunts back-stage and showed them the

mechanism that turned the rain on and off, introduced them to Robert Elliott who played the part of Handsome, and gave them one thrill after another.

The two weeks was not all adulation. Jeanne continued to be herself even in her own home town. She never made a curtain speech, though audiences begged her to talk to them. She had the curtain rung down in the middle of the second act one matinée because someone back-stage had left a door open and refused to close it. And she ordered Goodman Ace, dramatic critic of the *Journal Post,* thrown out of the theatre.

"But he's with the stage manager of the theatre," she was told.

"Then throw them both out," Jeanne ordered. The actor to whom she whispered gave a signal to the company stage manager—and he carried out her orders literally. Later Jeanne didn't know why she had wanted the two men thrown out. She did recall that they were back-stage, and though they had a right to be there, they annoyed her. Why they annoyed her she didn't remember.

Ace commemorated the event with the following article:

LOBBYING

I like Alice Brady.

* * *

One night last week I was taken back-stage at the

Shubert where Jeanne Eagels was giving her performance in "Rain."

* * *

Thought it would be interesting to see how the rain started and probably get a closeup of Miss Eagels in action.

* * *

We wandered about in the dark back there and stood for a moment looking in on the scene in which Miss Eagels was denouncing the reverend.

* * *

She stomped about and glanced in our direction and, of course, saw us standing there.

* * *

A signal or something must have been given the stage manager of her company for suddenly he darted over toward us and said "Off stage—come on, get out."

* * *

We explained who and why we were and he replied, "Off stage—come on, get out."

* * *

Being shagged off stage was a new experience so we both decided to stick it out. But at every exit the star started such a row it became embarrassing, and besides it looked like rain again so we left.

* * *

And so art was served.

Hawkins, my sleeve, please.

* * *

How do they get that way?

* * *

Does being out in the rain so much warp one's sense of proportion?

* * *

Back East that sort of stuff probably goes over big.

* * *

But this is too close to home.

* * *

I like Alice Brady.

* * *

You're welcome—ACE.

Friends of Jeanne tried to patch up her quarrel with Ace, but did not succeed. She was unwilling to apologize. She couldn't apologize. And Ace felt he had no reason to make any overtures to the temperamental star. Yet after her death he wrote one of the finest tributes ever paid to her.

LOBBYING

It Rained. . . .

* * *

And a slashing, stinging Rain beat pitilessly against a frail, fiery body.

****

Rain . . . a dull . . . dead . . . drip . . . pounding like a savage tomtom down upon an oppressed mind.

* * *

Rain—soggy . . . splashing . . . streaky . . .

* * *

Ripples . . . each a swirling whirlpool . . . dragging reason into a gluttonous vortex.

* * *

Rain on the roof. . . . Rain on the grass. . . . Rain in the trees. . . . Rain on the sea. . . .

* * *

Rain on the brain . . . drop by drop . . . tearing, wearing away. . . .

* * *

Warped. . . .

* * *

Nights of Rain soaked passion . . . night after night of wet . . . whimpering . . . water.

* * *

Nights . . . weeks . . . months . . . years. . . . Rain drops . . . drops. . . .

* * *

Drops . . . pools . . . brooks . . . rivers . . . torrents of Rain.

Crashing resistance before it . . . tormenting and clawing . . . gouging like fingernails. . . .

* * *

Months and years. . . . "Rain, Rain, go away, little Johnny wants——" "It Rains and the wind is never weary"—weary—"little Johnny wants"—weary . . .

* * *

The lulling swish—of Rain . . . lapping gently at gaping wounds. . . .

* * *

Weary . . . rest . . . in the cool, clear Rains to come. . . .

You're welcome.—ACE.

It was printed the day she was buried.

Jeanne treated Landon Laird, dramatic critic of the *Star,* in a far different manner. Not only did she give him a lengthy interview—and she hated giving interviews—but she also enacted for him, on the hottest day of the year, the entire second act of "Rain," playing every part.

Before and after the shows she was having a wonderful time, calling on the friends she loved and never forgot, and snubbing those who had laughed at her or been mean to her. One of these latter, eager to be her friend now that she was rich and famous, phoned her at her hotel.

"Jeanne, dear, this is So and So who used to go to school with you," she began.

Jeanne remembered her at once.

"School?" she said with a bitter laugh. "Don't you mean Jones' department store?"

Kansas City was changed; and all the girls Jeanne had played with were married and the mothers of boys and girls. Ruby Stepp, now Mrs. Goins, came to see her at her mother's house. She found Jeanne in the kitchen, an apron over her dress, and a carving knife in her hands.

"Do you like onions?" Jeanne demanded after the greeting.

"Love 'em," said Ruby.

"Swell," said Jeanne.

As soon as they could they went out together, Jeanne and Ruby, and rode all over town in Ruby's flivver. It was all right while Ruby went slow; but the moment she stepped on the gas Jeanne yelled—"Slow down!"

They went to Ruby's house and Ruby unearthed a lot of old pictures of Jeanne, one of them taken across from the Morris school, when Jeanne was wearing a coat that was getting too small for her. Jeanne loved that picture.

"Wasn't I young then?" she mused. "And innocent? And rather sweet? And how poor I was, and yet how happy! If I could only go back to those days! If I remember right I had the picture taken because I loved that coat and realized I couldn't wear it much

longer. I think Helen got it shortly after the picture was taken."

They talked all night, mostly about Ruby. Jeanne's history was too well known. It wasn't necessary to discuss it.

"You are lucky, Ruby," Jeanne said when she was leaving. "You've got everything, a home, a husband, your boys, love, comfort, respect—everything I want. I've got nothing at all. Oh, don't say I've got money and fame, and Ted. I've got nothing. I envy you."

The next morning Jeanne appeared at Georgia Brown's home, with a basket of roses taller than herself, and that afternoon she visited Anna Mall, now Mrs. Kretchmar, and Margaret Knowles.

Margaret had married Paul Lange, and they were running a drug store, and had two children. One of them was a girl who wanted to be a dancer; and Jeanne was happy to watch the little one dance for her.

She sat in one of the little wire-backed chairs and talked all afternoon to Paul and Margaret, getting up nervously now and then to pace the floor, or to dip her hands into the candy jars. Once when Paul asked her a question, she didn't answer. She was looking at him, and through him, and didn't know he was talking to her until she saw he was embarrassed.

Customers came in, and the clerks told them who Jeanne was. Trade was more than brisk that day. The great Jeanne Eagels was sitting in Lange's drug store just as if she were nothing but a high school girl,

eating candy and ice-cream, and talking with Paul and Margaret.

When Sadie Thompson met Handsome that night she gave him a fist full of candy she had taken from a jar in Lange's drug store. Handsome was surprised, but he liked the candy.

"I almost said 'Have some Lange-rish licorice, Handsome,'" Jeanne confessed the next day. "I don't know why I didn't. The audience wouldn't have known that the line wasn't in the script. They wouldn't have got it—but you would. Wouldn't you?"

"I've tried to see them all," Jeanne told Landon Laird, as she was leaving for Cincinnati—Margaret and Paul Lange were with her at the depot and Margaret wanted to meet Handsome, to pay her husband for being so attentive to Jeanne—"I've seen them watching me from all over the audience. I've been able to pick out their faces, old friends, old schoolmates, girls I worked with in the department store. I hope I've pleased them. I tried so hard. But you know how I am. Yet you have no idea how that rain, rain, rain, gets on one's nerves. Part of the time my clothes are dripping; and all the time I am depressed. Did you ever play in the rain night after night after night, year after year after year? I shall be sorry to say good-bye to Sadie Thompson, though some day I must. But it will be nice to play in something where the rain does not fall, and in which I can use my own voice, and not Sadie's."

She said another thing to Laird before the train pulled out, something he thought good enough to print.

"It's harder to stay at the top than to get there," she said. "I am now at the hardest point of my career. I must show people that I can play other characters as well as Sadie Thompson."

Laird shook hands and said good-bye. Jeanne sent someone to find Handsome, and boiled her messenger in oil because he had shouted at the top of his voice, "Hey, Handsome, Miss Eagels wants you right away." She took the bottle of rye that Margaret brought her, thanked her with a smile, introduced Handsome, and started for her train.

"Good-bye!" she cried. "Good-bye! Margaret, let your daughter be a dancer if you think she's fitted for it. But never, never let her be an actress."

XIII

SADIE THOMPSON and Jeanne Eagels, who had been inseparable for five years, kissed each other good-bye in Los Angeles. And Jeanne was both glad and sorry. The little waif from San Francisco had been good to Jeanne, had given her everything an actress craves; but she had taken much out of Jeanne too.

Now Jeanne was free. She might go to Europe and rest. She might stay in California, if she cared to, and work in a studio. Or she might go back to Broadway and take her pick of the new plays.

She was weak and ill, and she needed a rest. She loved California. The sun was bright and good—and the people were wonderful. But the movies—she had no love for them. Movies, she believed, were made by stupid people, of stupid people, and for stupid people. They hadn't advanced much since the days when she played parts for Thannhouser in New Rochelle, and Larchmont, and City Island, and New York. And the stage was still the stage.

She had visited some of the studios. She had talked and drank with old friends, Julian Eltinge, Richard Carle, Antonio Moreno, and many others who had quit the stage forever to bask in the sunshine and live in celluloid. Hordes of old friends and new had begged her to stay in Hollywood the rest of her life.

"Why go on trouping forever?" they asked. "Build yourself a home here. It beats living in New York. You never have to worry about rainy nights and scanty audiences. There are no matinées on Christmas, no laying off in Holy Week, no going stranded on the road, no one night stands, no getting up at 4 o'clock in the morning to get the train for the next town."

Eltinge talked to her in this vein all one night, and Jeanne laughed at him, between drinks, and mimicked movie directors she had watched. And Ted Coy sat silent, grinning, drinking glass for glass with her, until his hands shook so he could hardly raise the glass to his lips.

Once upon a time, perhaps he thought, that frail lovely woman drank nothing but champagne; and a little of that would make her blonde head buzz. Now she drank whatever there was to drink, gin, champagne, whisky, wine, cordial, beer, and did not seem to feel it until suddenly she fell to the floor.

Everybody drank in California. Jeanne and Ted went nowhere that someone didn't take a bottle from the dresser, or the clothes closet, or the private bar downstairs, and pour a man's size drink. One couldn't get away from drink—unless one happened to be rude.

Perhaps Ted and Jeanne had indulged more freely in San Francisco and Los Angeles than in any other cities they had visited—yet there had been plenty in Chicago and Boston and Minneapolis and Kansas City and Detroit and Cincinnati and Washington, D. C.

It may have been there weren't so many old friends in these eastern cities as they had encountered in the west.

Whatever his reflections might have been, Coy picked up Eltinge's small white woolly dog, carefully opened the middle drawer of the dresser, placed the little dog therein, closed the drawer, and continued amiably to drink and grin with his wife and his host.

Jeanne had agreed to play two weeks in San Diego, but she cancelled this engagement so she might have more time in San Francisco and Los Angeles and Monterey.

"I'm crazy about Monterey," she said; "there's no place in the world like it. Monterey and Carmel, that drive along the ocean, and the weird trees—what do they call them, Lebanon Cypress?—and the golf courses at Del Monte and Pebble Beach, Gouverneur Morris' ancient adobe house, the Presidio, the funny little shacks by the beach! I must buy a place out here."

She allowed herself to be photographed swinging a golf club. She allowed it to be said she had bought a vast tract near Pebble Beach, and intended to live there.

It wasn't to help the play that Jeanne allowed the story to be published. She thought it would boost Monterey real estate. "Rain" needed no publicity. In its second week in San Francisco, a few hours by train or auto from Monterey, it took in $30,000, and this without giving extra performances.

The company was disbanded, after the last performance in Los Angeles, and sent back to New York. The scenery and the rain making effects and the props were crated and shipped. But Jeanne and Ted lingered on in the film capital for some little time.

They stopped in Chicago on their way to New York and registered at the Hotel Sherman. As she was dancing up to the registry clerk, Jeanne happened to see her friend Ernest Byfield, the owner of the hotel, and she gave him a wide smile and pointed to her black eye and her broken jaw.

"Look what my husband has done now," she said cheerfully.

Later, when she wanted her divorce from Ted, Byfield took the witness stand and told the judge what Jeanne had said.

Ted presented no defence, and the divorce was granted.

That broken jaw was just another injury to Jeanne. A surgeon replaced the bone with a silver plate but she suffered pain occasionally, in spite of the plate.

Ted kept silent until long after Jeanne had been awarded her decree. He knew that if he contradicted her she would not be given a divorce; and though he still loved her, he wanted her to be free. He realized he should not have married her. He had proven to himself that he was not the man to manage her, and that neither of them could be happy so long as they lived together.

"He beat me," Jeanne told the judge. "But that was nothing new. He began to kick me and to pinch me soon after we were married. Sometimes he struck me in the face, sometimes in the stomach."

After Jeanne was dead, and beyond hurt, Ted told his version of what happened on the train from California.

"Jeanne got into the stateroom with six bottles of whisky," he said, "and began to drink as soon as we left the station. I couldn't stand it, and so I opened the window and threw the bottles out.

"We undressed and climbed into our berths, she in the lower. She was quiet for a time, and I thought she had gone to sleep. But I was wrong. She got up suddenly, saying that her maid, who was sleeping in a lower berth at the other end of the car, had a few bottles. She intended to get them, and defied me to stop her.

"She leaped out of her berth and started to open the door of our compartment, and as she was in her nightgown I couldn't let her go. I reached out and tried to grab her arm to hold her. The train was going around a curve at the time, I remember. She jerked away from me, and slipped and fell, striking a corner of the lower berth.

"That's how she got the broken jaw, and the black eye. I never struck her. I never pinched or kicked her. I never put my hands on her except in tenderness."

II

Jeanne found Sadie Thompson waiting for her in New York and asking a "return engagement" for two weeks.

Jeanne was but too glad to oblige—and when the two weeks had gone, she gave Sadie a farewell party in her home in Ossining.

The usual things happened, and Jeanne drank, and drove her guests into the night.

"Get out! Go home, all of you! Get out! Get out!"

She didn't wait for them to go. She called her chauffeur, and drove at dizzy speed into New York. She registered at the Hotel Algonquin—and then, so far as her friends knew, she vanished.

They next heard that she was in Los Angeles, making a picture with John Gilbert, to be called "Man, Woman, and Sin." And Ted Coy was with her, and afraid she was falling in love with Gilbert or some other motion picture actor.

Monta Bell who had met Jeanne in Los Angeles when she was playing "Rain," had met her again in New York, and induced her to take a part in the picture.

Bell, who wrote the story out of his newspaper experiences, cast Jeanne as a woman reporter who is more to her editor than she should be. The boy, played by Gilbert, is a cub reporter who wants to marry the girl

Jeanne Eagels and John Gilbert in a scene from
MAN, WOMAN, AND SIN

—until he learns the truth about her. He surprises her with the editor. He kills the man—in self-defence. But, as he loves the girl too much to blacken her name, he has no defence. And so he is condemned to be hanged. The boy's mother appeals to the girl, and in the nick of time she saves him.

Jeanne liked Monta Bell, and she liked the story. Bell introduced John Gilbert; and she liked him, too. And there she was, in Hollywood, making a picture, though only a few weeks before she had laughed at the idea.

The picture took a long time to complete, and Jeanne repeated all she had said about stupidity in the movies. Mama Froggy had warned her against being superior to the picture people, but the warning meant little to Jeanne. She hated everyone on the lot, she said, except Monta Bell and Gilbert.

She could not accustom herself to the routine of the studio, getting to her dressing room at a certain hour, making up, and then waiting for hours—or perhaps for whole days—for the cameras to be properly adjusted, and the lights to be arranged just so, and the director to make up his mind what to do. It was more than boring to sit around all day in costume and grease paint, waiting for something to happen.

Jeanne stood it as long as she could, then walked off the set. She was gone for three days, and during her absence everybody in the cast agreed that the way to punish her was to cut her dead when and if she did

appear. They wouldn't talk to her, wouldn't look at her. They'd make her a pariah. That would teach her a lesson.

But they didn't have a chance. When Jeanne appeared she was sweet and sober, and a little hurt. She walked directly up to Bell, and shook her finger at him. "I've got a bone to pick with you," the astonished actors heard her exclaim.

Now in Hollywood a director, when he is "shooting a picture," is as absolute in his power, and as much revered and feared, as a full admiral on his flagship in time of war. And it is something akin to treason to walk up to director, or admiral, and tell him what you think.

The onlookers waited to see Jeanne shrivel up and catch her death of cold. They wouldn't have been surprised to see her vanish in a little cloud of smoke. But what they heard and saw was even more surprising.

They heard Bell and Jeanne laughing, laughing as though they both appreciated the joke Jeanne's three-day hooky-playing had been. And they saw the two shaking hands, and regarding each other as a couple of good pals.

Studio officials complained bitterly that Jeanne was drinking champagne continuously in the bungalow she used as a dressing room; and that no matter how diligently they watched the gates Jeanne's supply came in regularly, and in quantities.

It was rumored all over Hollywood and Culver City

and Universal City and Los Angeles and Beverly Hills, that Jeanne had to be propped up and held while the camera men were shooting close-ups of her; and that a double was used whenever possible to speed the picture. But this was but rumor, and malicious rumor.

Gilbert tells of a visit she made to his home with Beatrice Lillie.

"We sat here all evening," he says, "and Miss Eagels wasn't drinking anything. We talked of pictures, and picture people, and of the theatre. Both Miss Lillie and Miss Eagels imitated various well known people of the stage—and they were excruciating.

"Then we got to talking of what people wanted out of life, what were the best things to be had of life. And Jeanne said—'The most perfect gift of God is simplicity of soul.'

"She sighed a little at that, and then she smiled. 'It doesn't come to many of us though, does it?' she asked. 'And we do not retain it very long.'"

Gilbert saw her but once after the picture was finished. That was in a New York hotel where he and Ina Claire, his bride, were stopping. They were preparing for their honeymoon in Europe when Jeanne arrived with flowers for the bride, and congratulations for the bridegroom.

She looked like a wraith, thin almost to emaciation. Her smile hadn't dimmed; but her laugh was the ghost of a laugh.

"I think I'll take the same boat," she said. "I need a rest, and I'd love to see Europe again, with you two."

It was "John Gilbert in 'Man, Woman and Sin,' with Jeanne Eagels" when the picture was released. Gilbert was the star.

But when Jeanne saw Gilbert for the last time, "Jeanne Eagels in 'The Letter'" was the great boast of the motion picture world, the first dramatic smash of the talkies. And Gilbert's first talking picture "His Glorious Night," was already being panned by the critics.

John and Ina were on their honeymoon when Jeanne dropped dead.

III

As suddenly as Jeanne had vanished from New York, she reappeared, engaged to enact the leading rôle in Sam Harris' production of Maurine Watkins' play "Chicago," with Sam Forrest as stage manager.

Miss Watkins, a demure and beautiful young woman, walked into the *Chicago Tribune* office one summer afternoon and found herself on the payroll. She had had no newspaper experience; but she was ornamental, and good for the moral tone of the local room; and she was allowed to cover unimportant assignments once in a while.

She happened to be the only reporter of any kind

present when the day city editor was apprised by a news service that at such and such an address a young woman had shot and killed her lover. He sent Miss Watkins, and assigned a rough and tumble "leg man" to go with her, a chap who knew Chicago's underworld better than the cops. He couldn't write, but he could help Miss Watkins cover the story.

They arrived to find the dead man lying where he fell, the woman drunk, and the phonograph playing merrily. It was Miss Watkins' first experience with murder; and it gave her the idea for a play. She made it a bitter satire. She showed the murder, the preparations for the trial, and the trial in which twelve good men and true found the murderess not guilty—and the orchestra set it all to the rollicking tune of "Chicago! Chicago! Wonderful town. Toddling town! Chicago! Chicago—Dum-te-de-dee—Dum-te-de-dee!"

Jeanne read the play and said it was "wonderful." Everything was wonderful. It was wonderful to come back to the stage, wonderful to escape from Hollywood, and most wonderful to have Sam Forrest with her again. She was only a leading lady in Hollywood. On Broadway she was a star. In the Harris organization she was a queen.

Ah, but it wasn't so wonderful after all, for Sam Forrest had his ideas, and Jeanne had hers. And neither would give in.

Forrest says that Jeanne wanted to play the "Chi-

cago" woman for sympathy; but this is hard to believe. Perhaps he misunderstood her. Jeanne said she wanted to play the part straight, and that Forrest insisted on burlesque.

"When I killed my lover," Jeanne declared, "Forrest wanted me to shoot him again and again and again, and to say 'and take that, and that, and that, you cur' —and naturally I wouldn't do it.

"There were lots of other things—especially in the courtroom scene. The judge was to take out from a secret drawer a bottle of whisky, and, without leaving the bench, guzzle it down in full view of the spectators. I wouldn't stand for that either. I thought it would be much more effective if he sneaked his drink."

Jeanne and Forrest quarreled continually, and Miss Watkins stood in back of Jeanne, and raised her face to the flies—but not at such an angle that she couldn't wink at Sam—and joined her hands as though in prayer, while her lips made movements that slyly egged Sam on.

After one of these verbal battles Jeanne walked off the stage; and when she returned, days later, she found Francine Larrimore rehearsing the rôle.

The play opened in New York burlesqued to the limit—but after the first night it was un-burlesqued, and played the way Jeanne would have played it.

A long time after Jeanne had walked out on him the second time, Sam Forrest had occasion to visit the Paramount studio in Long Island. While he sat

watching the filming of a scene, Jeanne came up behind him and put her hands over his eyes.

"Who is it?" she demanded.

"Is it Jeanne?" he asked.

She leaned over and kissed him.

"Of course it is, Sam," she said. "You're not mad at me, are you, darling?"

Sam blessed her with his smile and took her hands.

"Of course I'm not," he said. "What man could ever stay mad at you?"

IV

It was almost by accident that Jeanne Eagels found her next rôle, after she had walked out of "Chicago."

Someone sent her a copy of the third act of "Her Cardboard Lover," and Jeanne felt that it was a great play. The day she read it she went to a luncheon party. She talked about the play to Charley Chaplin, and discussed Laurette Taylor's work in it. Gilbert Miller sat across the table. Jeanne pointed her finger at him.

"Say," she said. "I like your play!"

"Now there," said Miller, "is an intelligent woman."

"I could tell it was good by reading the last act."

"Why don't you read the rest of it? Or better still, why don't you play 'Simone'? Laurette is leaving."

"All right. Why not?"

Miller became excited.

"Are you just joking or will you come down to my office and talk business?" he wanted to know.

Jeanne signed a contract, but she didn't report for rehearsals on time. She rehearsed for five days before the play opened, and she admitted frankly that her performance was "rather underdone." Even Mama Froggy criticized her, and the first night audience called only for Leslie Howard, when the curtain was rung down.

Jeanne perfected the rôle, strengthened the character, and made it one of the histrionic masterpieces of modern times. Jeanne became almost as much attached to Simone as she had been to Sadie.

Heywood Broun, who was running a column called "It Seems to Me" saw Jeanne on the opening night of "Her Cardboard Lover," and when he saw her again he took the liberty of saying, "It seems to me, Miss Eagels, that you were miscast."

"That's too bad," Jeanne replied. "But, Mr. Broun, you have never seemed to me."

Jeanne didn't know whether she'd rather play Simone or Sadie she told Clem Lawrence of the *Morning Telegram.*

"Each is so human and so true," she said. "Simone will never have the universal appeal that Sadie had, but women adore the little French monkey. The matinées simply ring with their laughter. They love her. She answers the desire for useless luxury which

every one of us has. Probably she will never get the applause that Sadie did. I have two thousand letters from ministers and priests about Sadie."

Jeanne was not jealous of Leslie Howard, though the first night audience had cried "Howard! Howard!" with all its thousands of lungs, and there had been no cry for Eagels.

"Howard has given me the most marvelous help!" she said. "There are two men I would rather work with than all the rest of the actors in the world, Leslie Howard and George Arliss. Each has the same fine feeling for the theatre, and each will work in the most unselfish and painstaking way for the success of the play. To each of these men 'the play's the thing.'"

The play was the thing to Jeanne also. She was the star, but she wanted everybody in the cast to be as good as the rôle demanded. She worked not for herself so much as for the play. "It's team-work I want," she used to say.

There was always perfect team-work between Jeanne and her company. Always? Well, usually. Sometimes Jeanne "gagged" her part, said funny things that weren't in the play, and made the cast laugh so hard they had difficulty continuing in their rôles. And once—

It was in the middle of the second act, while "Her Cardboard Lover" was playing in New York.

Jeanne suddenly turned to Howard and said, "Get me a glass of water."

Howard was confused. For a moment he didn't believe he had heard aright. Or possibly that was a cue. The script was always being changed, it seems. Perhaps this was a new line, and he was supposed to say something in answer to it. But what? Stupid of him, he felt. He stood still and stared. So did Jeanne. Finally Howard blurted out—

"I beg your pardon. What did you say?"

"Get me a glass of water. Right away."

No, the line was not in the play. Howard realized that now. He resented Jeanne's imperious tone. He didn't know her well. What was she trying to do—make him look ridiculous? He didn't understand that Jeanne felt faint, that her throat was dry, and that she had difficulty in speaking.

"No, no," he said. "I'm not going to get you any water."

"Very well then," said Jeanne. "I'll get it myself."

The amazed audience saw the great actress walk off the stage, and the curtain fall, in the middle of a scene. Always after that there was a glass of water concealed somewhere on the stage for Jeanne's convenience.

Jeanne liked Leslie Howard, but another young Englishman in the cast interested her much more. This was Anthony Bushell.

Bushell was tall, handsome, distinguished-looking, but reserved. He seemed cold, woman-proof, a challenge to everything feminine. Jeanne made a point of studying him, but though he was ever polite and

friendly to her, she was nettled to discover she could not capture his complete attention.

"What sort of man is he?" she asked an actor who had known Tony in London. "He's never even tried to hold my hand."

The actor laughed.

"Oh, Tony's an idealist," he explained. "He's waiting for the right woman—and he'll marry her."

"Who is the woman?" Jeanne demanded.

"I don't know. He hasn't met her yet."

"Well," said Jeanne, "I like idealists. They're the only men who've never tried to take advantage of me."

Perhaps she had heard the story of Lillian Russell and DeWolf Hopper when they played with Weber and Fields. For five minutes every night, Hopper and Miss Russell hid in a stage tree while Weber and Fields talked in secrecy below them.

Every night the two in the tree conversed in whispers. Five minutes a night isn't much—but multiply five minutes a hundred times or more, and it amounts to a good long working day.

Lillian Russell realized this on the last night of the play. "Do you know I've talked to you, alone, like this, for hours and hours?" she asked. "And do you realize that I've been perfectly safe all the time? That's never happened to me before."

Even after Tony had married Zelma O'Neill, the actress, Jeanne kept studying him, sometimes to Zelma's great annoyance, trying to tease him into a mild flirta-

tion and getting nowhere. At the same time she was doing her best to make him a great actor.

Bushell made a good appearance on the stage, and matinée audiences always applauded him. Jeanne insisted that he be her leading man in "Jealousy." He was. And he wasn't.

Something happened to the young actor when he appeared before the camera and the microphone. He was untrained in the ways of the film world; and his voice was wrong. He didn't know that the mike demands a voice much lower than the stage exacts; or, if he did know, he forgot it.

When "Jealousy" was first pre-viewed people laughed as though they were hearing and seeing a farce. Jeanne wept, and demanded that she be allowed to remake the picture—with Tony out of it. He was out—out of the picture, and out of her life. But if anyone was sorry it wasn't Zelma O'Neill.

XIV

A FEW weeks before she died, Jeanne Eagels went to the opening of a new play with G. B. Outhwaite, a thin, spruce, aristocratic-looking real estate broker.

He lived in Jeanne's apartment building, and they had become quite good friends after several months of saying "good-evening" and "nice day." She liked him because he was young, and wholesome and gay, and because he was different from any of the others she had liked or loved, but principally because she couldn't handle him.

She could not make him drop everything in the middle of the afternoon to go shopping with her. He knew nothing about theatricals, and when Jeanne's guests talked shop he would curl up on the davenport and go to sleep. When she attempted brusqueness with him she arrived nowhere. When she said "Here's your hat," he said "Good-night," yawned, and left her. When he felt she was drinking too much he said so frankly.

"But it's so refreshing to go anywhere with him," Jeanne used to say. "He actually insists on paying the check for my dinner. That hasn't happened to me in years."

"That's because she's been going out with actors," Outhwaite would explain.

A Broadway columnist saw Jeanne and Outhwaite at the opening, and asked Jeanne about the new play she was to "do" for Harris.

"It's a gorgeous thing," Jeanne said. "One hundred men make love to me. And in the last act I'm a wreck."

That line may illustrate her life.

Many men had made love to Jeanne, and she had loved a few—in her own way—Dubinsky, Chadbourne, Coy, O'Neill. And if the term love may be loosely used, you may add the names of Arliss, Harris, Forrest, Eltinge, Carle, Gilbert, Outhwaite, Bushell, Warren, Howard, Webb, Colton, Wolf, Mack, and many others.

She loved men most for qualities of their minds, for the things they had accomplished, or might accomplish, for their philosophies of life. Physical love she felt but lightly. Passion she did not know, except on the stage. She was more actress than woman in her relations with men.

Really she had but two great loves—her mother and the theatre.

She was so lovely, so dainty, so fragile, and yet so gay and reckless and irresponsible and brave, that men fell in love with her at sight. If they were young and good-looking, or if they were big men in their professions—"top dogs"—she was glad. She liked to surround herself with young men she could pamper and advise. "My boys," she called them.

She loved Arliss because he was the perfect actor,

Eltinge because he was so beautiful as a woman, and so wise and kind as a man, Carle because he was the perfect comedian, Mack because he was such a dynamic personality, Forrest because he was her ideal stage director.

Jeanne told Handsome Ed Dubinsky that her love for his brother Morris was the great love of her life. She told Barry O'Neill that he was the one real love of her life. And she told Mama Froggy that Chadbourne was the only man she ever cared for "with all her heart and soul"—until she met Ted Coy.

Jeanne saw life and love, not as the average woman sees it, but as the actress sees it; strained through the romantic mind of a playwright, brightened, and shadowed as by stagecraft, quickened or softened by the music of an invisible orchestra.

She loved but three men with anything like real and deep affection, Chadbourne, Coy, and Barry O'Neill. And it may be that this affection was neither so genuine nor so deep as she fancied. Yet she did love these three more than she loved the others. And all three of them brought her anguish.

She was ill for months after Chadbourne left her, broken in spirit, void of ambition. When she married Coy she began to drink all the liquor she could find. And her love for Barry O'Neill swept her off the legitimate stage forever, and made the rest of her life a mockery to her.

Barry O'Neill was in her company, "Her Card-

board Lover." And though she saw him every day—and he made love to her every night—she did not notice him "off stage," and did not speak to him. She did not deign even to say "good-evening" or "good-night."

Barry is tall and strong and dark. He is handsome, and his hair has a slight curl in it. He is English. He served in the war and won a few decorations. His voice is deep and rich, and his stage appearance excellent. But for months he was to Jeanne only a member of her cast.

One night she spoke to him and he answered.

"Good-night," she said.

"Good-night, Miss Eagels."

And they were sweethearts.

It was in Chicago, and they were playing at the Adelphi Theatre. Jeanne had filed suit for divorce, but it would take months before the case was heard, and the decree awarded.

The management of the Adelphi was more or less hostile to Jeanne, because of her record. She had been ill in Philadelphia. Her throat had swollen so that she could not swallow. She could barely speak. The doctors—she visited them in every city—advised her not to continue playing. But the house was sold out for a week, and she played her rôle every night. However, she refused to play the week in Boston, for her throat was worse—and she was blamed for drinking.

She was sent from Boston to Chicago on a special train—a ruse to escape a creditor who threatened to

sue—and had to change cars at Albany. There was a blizzard in Albany, and Jeanne berated the company manager, blaming him for the storm. Again she was accused of being drunk.

Ralph Kettering, Chicago manager for Gilbert Miller and Al Woods, waited in the box office of the theatre every night until she appeared—expecting every night that she would not appear. She would come tripping lightly into the foyer, doing her dance step, humming a song. She would smile brightly at the men in the box office—including Kettering who answered smile with scowl.

"Hello, Bustards," she greeted them.

"Howdy, Witch," they answered.

It was sort of a password with her everywhere in Chicago. Even the hotel clerks were trained, it appears, to answer her "Hello, Bustards," with "Howdy, Witch." It tickled her that this was so. She danced up to them as she did to the box office men, got her key and danced away.

"Her Cardboard Lover" was booked for six weeks in Chicago; and Jeanne didn't miss one night. Each night the house was sold out too. And each night Jeanne came in on time, sober, cheery, looking well and young and beautiful as ever.

Every night, after she greeted the box office men she would ask about Ethel Barrymore. She hated Ethel, and was jealous of her. She wanted to know every night how Ethel's play was doing, whether she or Ethel

drew the bigger crowd. Every night she laughed when she heard that Barrymore too had sold out.

Every night after the show she would wait in her dressing room for Barry's knock on the door. Every night they would find a new speakeasy, and drink and talk. Perhaps on their way to her hotel they would pass an all night restaurant, and Jeanne must get out of the car and enter, to explore the kitchen and talk to the chef. Or they would go looking all over town for a hot dog stand—and they aren't easy to find on winter nights, even in such a city as Chicago. Or they might spend an entire evening in a chop suey restaurant. Every night two or three drinks, and no more.

She was badly cut and bruised in an automobile accident on the night of Washington's birthday, between matinée and evening performance. But she went on with the show that night as though nothing had happened.

One night Jeanne talked of theatrical stars, and the homage people paid them, and of the grandeur and dignity that stars deserved.

"We should surround our every public action with pomp and magnificence," she said, carried away with her own enthusiasm. "We should be almost as unapproachable as queens. We should walk on rich purple carpets from our dressing rooms into the streets. We should never let down. Now we shine for a little hour or two in a darkened theatre. We are glorious, unearthly, people set up above all others because of our

genius, our capacity to sway others, to make them laugh and cry, to make them live a romance we but play. And, when the lights go on, what happens to us? We go through dim little passageways, and through a door opening on a dirty alley. Presently we are on the sidewalk, mingling with people, lost, nothing but individuals merged in the common herd."

The next day she went to the house manager, dancing up to him, but not humming.

"I was reading the other day that Marilyn Miller's manager had a carpet stretched from her dressing room into the street," she said.

"How interesting," the house manager said. He smiled broadly. He was rather flattered that Eagels was so nice to him.

"Isn't it? And if there isn't a carpet from my dressing room into the street tomorrow, I shall not appear tomorrow night."

The house manager's smile was not so broad as he watched Jeanne dance away.

She phoned the next night, half an hour before the curtain was due to rise.

"Is the carpet stretched?"

"It's stretched."

"Thank you," Jeanne answered, and in less than five minutes, danced into the foyer.

"Hello, Bustards."

"Hello, Witch."

She looked about the foyer.

"I detest these decorations," she said. "They must be changed tomorrow."

The house manager, who had come in time to catch the last words, looked distressed—but game.

"I'll have them changed," he said.

"They're atrocious. And Miss Barrymore?"

"Sold out again," said the house manager, savage glee in his tone.

"And so am I," Jeanne answered sweetly, dancing away.

On the last night of the Chicago run, Barry went out of the theatre without knocking on Jeanne's door. He went out alone, without telling Jeanne, without asking her permission. Jeanne waited for him a long while. Then she sent for him, and learned that he was gone.

Her career in the legitimate theatre ended that night forever.

II

It was a Saturday night early in March, 1928, that "Her Cardboard Lover" ended its run in Chicago—and closed the book of Eagels in the American theatre.

The play was to open in Milwaukee the following Monday. The Milwaukee Press Club had bought out the house for every night in the week, and had sold thousands of dollars' worth of advertising for the program.

But Jeanne Eagels had disappeared, and there was no understudy. She had left the Adelphi Theatre in Chicago after the last performance, and though two cities were searched for her it was not until after midnight Sunday that she was found.

"Drunk again!" everybody said. "Look in every speakeasy." An impossible task, but it was attempted.

Ralph Kettering found her. She was in a room in the Congress Hotel, ill, and seething with rage and jealousy, and overcome by drink. She had been weeping. But when Kettering appeared she began to laugh, and to hurl bottles out of the windows, empty bottles that had contained Scotch and champagne. Kettering told her to stop it, and she hurled a bottle at him. He retreated, to return with the manager of the company. She threw bottles at both of them and locked the door when they fled.

"Send for 'Red' Gallagher," Kettering advised. That was an inspiration.

"Red" was the only man in the world who ever completely dominated Jeanne Eagels. Arliss and Forrest and Belasco had managed to tame her, after a fashion, and Eltinge and Carle had been successful, at times, in bending her will to theirs. But Gallagher had never failed.

Gallagher is a stage hand in the Harris Theatre, and is known both as "Senator" and as "Red." For more years than most of us care to acknowledge he was "Red, the Bat Boy," the great mascot of the Chicago

Cubs. He was the bat boy before Anson was Anson, and after Chance was Chance.

Jeanne met him when she played "Rain" in the Harris Theatre, and liked his masterful way, his beaming good-natured face, his grizzled red hair, his stories of "Tinker to Evers to Chance," and his willingness to oblige.

And "Red" adored Jeanne though he admitted "she had a nasty temper." Gallagher doesn't make a habit of coddling anybody, especially temperamental actresses. And the first time he saw Ted Coy knocking on the door of Jeanne's dressing room, he felt that something should be done.

Ted knocked gently, timidly. "It's Ted," he said. "May I come in, darling?"

Gallagher snorted.

"Huh!" he said. "Imagine that! Are we a man or are we a mouse? 'May I come in, darling?' is it? I know how I'd treat that neurotic lovely thing if I was her husband. Catch me knocking on her door. Why doesn't he just bust in like a man—and if she gives him a bit of her lip, let him kiss her or kick her. 'Tis one and the same."

Jeanne liked to hear "Red" talk, and she was fond of one of his stories especially—the two Irishmen discussing the Cubs–Giants game while riding to the loop in an "L" smoker. "Iron Man" McGinnity had beaten the Cubs 2 to 0, and the big Harp "with the Galways" was disgusted.

"Cubs!" he said. "Sure they ought to call them Dubs. Ball players, are they? Sure who have they got? Schulte, Steinfelt, Sheckard, Tinker, Evers, Chance—a lot of Dootchmen! 'Tis no wonder the Giants cud bate them. Ain't they Irish, the Giants?—McGinnity, McGraw, Bresnahan, McCormick, Donlin, Doyle —— It only goes to prove what I've always said to you, Mickey, me boy. Ball players should be Irish, or they're no good at all."

"What about Honus Wagner?" somebody in the car piped up.

The big Mick said nothing, but the little one laughed, sharp, like a terrier barks.

"Heh! Heh!" says he. "He's got you there, Cornelius. Heh! Heh! What about Honus Wagner?"

The big fellow was stumped for a moment, and he scratched his Galways and looked mad. Then he turned on the little one. "Honus Wagner is the greatest ball player in the world, if he is a Dootchman," he admitted. "But if you were to look back into his ancistry, you'd find some Irish in him, you A. P. A. son of a boot!"

"Listen here," Gallagher said to Jeanne when she had fired her maid for no reason at all, "are you one of these cuckoo dames who fly off the handle every minute? What's eating you? You put the Frenchy back to work, or you and me ain't pals."

"A man!" cried Jeanne. "My God, a man at last! I'll put the Frenchy back to work."

Ralph Kettering knew that Gallagher could make Jeanne get out of bed and go to Milwaukee, because he had heard the story of how "Red" had treated her on the last day of "Rain."

Jeanne was leaving, after the matinée, when she noticed that her name had been taken down from the marquee, and Margaret Lawrence's had been substituted. She saw too that all her posters were covered with Margaret's pictures.

She erupted. Men hid themselves, or, trapped and unable to flee, stood silent and appalled. Eagels had been insulted, and wasn't going to give the evening performance—and the house sold out. She was going to have everybody fired.

But Gallagher strolled up to her and said: "Come here. I want to talk to you before you bust a blood vessel." He marched her into her dressing room.

"You're making an awful fool of yourself," he said. "Don't you like Maggie Lawrence? Don't you know it's union rules to change the posters between the last matinée and evening performance of a run? When you came here, didn't you see your name up in lights as the coming attraction? Huh? And wasn't it the Saturday night before you opened? Then what the hell are you kicking about? Go out there now and apologize to all them men you've bullywagged—them trembly-kneed he-men that's afraid of you only because they're too nice to smack you down as they ought to."

Jeanne emerged sweet and gracious, and told every-

body it was quite all right, and they were all dears to be so sweet to her. They were not to mind about putting up her name again, and she would play that night as usual.

"For the love of Mike, Jeanne Eagels, look at you now," Red greeted her as he stood in the doorway of her room in the Congress. "For two pins I'd go out and never come back again. I'm ashamed of you! You're acting like a spoiled baby. You ought to be spanked! Get up now, and put on your clothes, while I turn my back. And no monkey business out of you either. I'll not stand any shenanigans. You'll be on your way to Milwaukee in an hour."

Jeanne dressed hurriedly, laughing, giggling, making jokes. And Red, with his back to her, went on with his half-meant abuse.

"Drinking, eh? Throwing bottles out the window! Throwing bottles at people, like a southpaw with the charley-horse! All because a man goes out to take a drink alone. A fine pride you have, Jeanne Eagels. A great goose you are. Are you dressed?"

Jeanne was ready to go, but she would not go by train. She insisted on a taxicab. Red put her into one, grumbling, and bade her good-bye. And as soon as Jeanne left him she collected her maid, and Charley Clow, a rich man's son, and a whole case of champagne.

Jeanne got to Milwaukee—eventually—and went to her hotel and stayed in her room all week. She was too ill to go to the theatre, she said, and there was no

Red Gallagher in Milwaukee to make her change her mind.

The manager of the Milwaukee theatre, Kettering, the company manager, and members of the cast, did what they could—but Jeanne refused to leave her room.

Jeanne never denied that she had taken too much liquor in Chicago, and in Milwaukee also. But she claimed that her consumption of liquor was not to be blamed for her illness, and that it was illness and not drink that caused her to miss that week in Milwaukee —and the week that was to follow in St. Louis.

She had visited three doctors during the last week in Chicago. One of these had wanted to give her electric treatments. Jeanne refused, but he got her to touch one of his electrical contrivances, through a ruse, and she was severely shocked, she said. She picked up the machine, weak as she was, and hurled it at him. Two other doctors were ready to swear that she was suffering from nervous exhaustion when she visited them, and a serious infection of the throat which was sapping her strength and making it dangerous for her to speak. They were not allowed, however, to swear to anything in Jeanne's favor when Jeanne was brought before Equity on charges.

Jeanne's record was against her. She was sick—but nobody in Boston, or Milwaukee, or St. Louis would believe it. The manager of the Milwaukee theatre called her "an imp from hell," and complained to Equity.

Jeanne missed the week in Milwaukee, but promised to go to St. Louis if she had to go by plane. The company, and the scenery, were waiting for her. But she stayed in Milwaukee, and when Equity's representative called to find out why, she refused to see him.

It was not a question with Equity's board of managers as to whether Jeanne was suffering from nervous exhaustion and a throat infection, or from plain alcoholism. It was a question as to whether she had, or had not, defied Equity's representative.

They found she had defied him, and they fined her two weeks' pay—which was figured at $3,600, though Jeanne's contract called for a salary and a percentage of the profits—and banned her from the stage for eighteen months. They wanted to make it a permanent ban—but Ethel Barrymore, though she knew Jeanne hated her—would not tolerate that. And Ethel is powerful in Equity.

Jeanne's friends maintain "she never had a chance." The witnesses against her, they say, were a stage manager she had discharged, and his friends. She was not allowed to hear the testimony against her. Her lawyer was not permitted to cross-examine witnesses. Jeanne was given the chance to defend herself—after being made to wait three hours in an ante-room—but she was not permitted to bring as her witnesses the doctors in New York and Chicago who could, and would, testify that she was too ill to work on the stage.

Jeanne admitted privately that she should be pun-

ished. But she felt that Equity had not been fair in its proceedings against her, that it had humiliated her by making her wait so long in the ante-room—where she could refute nothing that was said against her—and that the punishment was excessive.

"I was too sick to play," she summed up the case. "But I had been drinking too. That aggravated my illness. I admit that. But I didn't have a fair trial. And Equity can go to hell."

Jeanne had joined Equity after her return from London, but only under protest.

"I am not thoroughly convinced of the wisdom of my act," she wrote. "I cast my lot with you because I do not wish to embarrass my associates, nor oppose in any way an adjustment by which the managers, my own among others, may continue in the business of theatrical productions."

When she arrived in Minneapolis, months later, in vaudeville, she was glad to give an interview.

"I arrived Sunday," she said. "My trunks and wardrobe didn't. Therefore it was impossible for me to give a show. The papers will say I've been on a spree, or that I reeled into the theatre too drunk to play. Well—let them say it. I'm the girl that always gets the swell breaks. I'm the hard-hearted Hannah of the stage."

Equity's finding was announced on April 6, 1928. Jeanne's attorney asked for an appeal, and a committee of nine members was appointed to hear the appeal.

A time limit was fixed, but Jeanne was en tour in vaudeville when it expired. She did not appear. She had become convinced there was no use in appealing —and she wasn't going to let Equity make her wait three hours again. The ban would have been lifted on October 6, 1929.

On that day Jeanne's body, in the bronze and silver coffin, was lying in state in the family undertaker's parlor in Kansas City.

III

"Banished from Rome! What's banished but set free?"

Jeanne Eagels laughed about her banishment, after the first few days, and defied Equity and everybody connected with it. But she wept bitterly too, and said that her life was wrecked—"because I was sick and desperate and all alone, and drank too much trying to forget my illness and my loneliness, and because I refused to see that man from Equity. I was too sick to see him. But what do they care? I'm thrown out. I've lost everything. The most brutal criminals are given more consideration in our courts than Equity gave me. But I'll show them! I'll come back in eighteen months. And in the meantime—there's always vaudeville and the movies."

She realized that vaudeville would pay her more than the legitimate theatre, and that the movies would

pay more than vaudeville—both in money and in fame.

Already people pointed her out, not as "Jeanne Eagels, who was the star of 'Rain' and 'Her Cardboard Lover,'" but as "Jeanne Eagels, you know—she played with John Gilbert in 'Man, Woman, and Sin.'" It was a joke—this thing called fame. She received more recognition for one rôle in a moving picture than she had attracted on the stage.

Jeanne went to her country estate near Ossining, taking with her the members of "Her Cardboard Lover" company who were out of a job through her fault, and who had neither homes nor money. Several of them lived on her bounty for weeks. She took delight in cooking for them, and taking them to and from New York in her cars, and calling up men who might have work for them.

She had divorced Ted Coy, and there were a number of young men living at her home, but there was always someone to act as chaperone.

Jeanne had been banished but a few weeks when she was asked to appear at an actors' benefit performance in New York. All the others on the bill were members of Equity, and all those to be benefited were members of Equity, but Jeanne accepted the invitation gladly.

"I'll give them a little of Sadie Thompson," she said. "And then I'll make a quick change and give them the telephone scene from 'Her Cardboard Lover.'"

There was as much difference between Sadie and Simone as there was between the ancient bar maid in "A Gentleman's Mother," and the young soubrette. And Jeanne's versatility was appreciated by the great audience at the benefit, and vigorously applauded.

The skit led to her appearance in vaudeville. Harry Weber booked her for twenty weeks at $4,000 a week, and suggested that she needed two men to support her in the act. She selected two members of the "Her Cardboard Lover" troupe; but Equity objected. No union players might be associated with her. She was an outcast. Jeanne laughed, and selected a couple of non-union men. And then the Keith-Albee-Orpheum circuit cancelled her bookings—probably because it didn't care to antagonize Equity.

No matter, Jeanne made her vaudeville tour, and it was a triumph for her. Audiences marveled at her. She was a headliner wherever she went; and nobody seemed to care that Equity had thrust her into limbo.

She drank more than ever, after the show, and kept a supply of liquor in her dressing room. Friends would call for her and drink with her. They'd take her places, sometimes when she could hardly walk.

It was no uncommon sight to see her come into a room, walking sedately between two men who held her arms. She would look serene and charming, and only a few would realize that if her escorts let go her arms she would totter and fall.

Jeanne's companions would seat her in a comfortable

chair, and she would say, " How j' doo," " How j' doo," smiling and democratic, but extremely dignified. A princess could do it no better.

Along about 4 or 5 in the morning, Jeanne, or someone else, would remember another party, until then forgotten, at which Jeanne was supposed to be the guest of honor. The escorts would lead her out, and she would drink again until 7 or 8. A few hours' sleep, and she was sparkling with life, sober, funny, trying to please everybody in the place.

She returned to New York well satisfied with herself, but worrying about Barry O'Neill.

Barry was sweet, but he was trying too. On the first night of a play, for instance, Jeanne would leave him standing in the foyer of a theatre while she went about greeting friends. Barry would sulk.

" What's the matter with you? " he would demand— " why don't you introduce me to your friends? Are you ashamed of me? You needn't be. I'm as big as you are."

Jeanne would laugh at him, if she felt in the mood; or tell him never to speak to her again. Or she'd read him a lecture.

" Don't cheapen yourself. Don't run after people. Make them come to you. Don't be seen drinking in the Broadway night clubs. The speakeasies on the side streets are more private. Don't go around with cheap people. Give the public all it expects of an actor."

When she wasn't with O'Neill she was with Outhwaite.

Jane Cowl was puzzled the first time she saw Jeanne and Outhwaite together.

"Is that another one of Jeanne's lovers?" she asked.

"Tragedy!" cried Jeanne, imitating Jane Cowl in her most tragic moments. "Tragedy, tragedy, tragedy! For God's sake try to be human once in a while."

Jeanne was never seen in the night clubs. She preferred the blind pigs of New York or Ossining. One story puts her in an Ossining "joint" with Jack Colton, Outhwaite, "Winkie" Brooks, and others a few months before she died. She decided to get some air. She and the three men got into her car, and Jeanne ordered speed—which was unusual for her. Thirty-five miles she considered fast.

But this night she wanted "sixty or more."

"Step on the gas and let's see what the boat will do!"

"Winkie" stepped on the gas, and the scenery flew past. Jeanne screamed with delight. "Faster!" she said. "Faster!"

"Winkie" went faster—and suddenly a great wall began to loom up before them.

Outhwaite, who thought at first that they might be coming to some medieval castle, or possibly the great wall of China, shouted to "Winkie"—"Step on the brake."

"I am stepping on it," said the indignant "Winkie."

Outhwaite considered this for a moment. Maybe he was, but the car was going ahead, and the wall was coming toward them fast. And there was a man walking slowly ahead. The sight sobered Outhwaite.

"It's my foot you're stepping on," he said, "not the brake."

"Winkie" jerked at the wheel just in time to clear the man—but not in time to escape hitting one edge of the great gate that had suddenly opened in the wall.

The car was wrecked, but no one was seriously hurt. Everybody recovered in a moment or two—to discover they had crashed into Sing Sing penitentiary.

Colton, a great advocate for prison reform, began at once to speak to the guards on this subject, gently, but firmly, and with scholarly precision. Brooks denounced them for building such a rough high wall at this particular place. Outhwaite wanted to know why the guards should look so hard at him. "It's all right to crash in, isn't it?" he demanded. "Or is this place so exclusive? Go on, shoot us all. You've got rifles. We're desperadoes breaking into your nice jail. At least arrest us for burglary."

Jeanne laughed, picked herself up from the gravel, and looked around.

"It's beautiful," she said. "I didn't know a penitentiary could be so lovely. But why don't you plant some trees? Remind me tomorrow and I'll send some."

Unfortunately, say Jeanne's mother and her sister Helen, this story is not true.

XV

SHORTLY after she signed a contract to make three talking pictures for Paramount, Jeanne sold her estate in Briar Cliff Hills. But she felt she must have a country place, so she bought another estate, nearer Ossining. Count Gosta Marner sold it to her.

The house is the kind one sees on the sides or the tops of California hills. The land drops away from it in an almost sheer descent to the Hudson River. One might roll down, but few could walk down that slope. Jeanne realized this—but the view from her windows was so lovely that it compensated for the fact that neither she nor her guests could use the hill.

She bought a lot of toys that her guests might amuse themselves indoors; and had an expert come up from New York to show her exactly how to use them.

"The house is divine," she said, "and next year I'll have trees and gardens all around it—if I live."

She spent much time furnishing it, matching colors in the various rooms, buying beds and chairs and tables and window drapes and curtains. She spent much time studying the best places for vases of flowers. She wanted them where the lights would shine on them with the best effect. She oversaw everything, and bossed the carpenters.

"Look!" she said to a man putting up her screens,

you've left a little chink here. Is that so the bugs can run in and out?"

"Yes ma'am," and the man went on with his work.

She would sit for hours looking at the river and the mountains.

"There's something about a mountain that makes me seem little and no account. Mountains are so vast, so mysterious, so patient. They were there thousands of years before I was ever thought of. They will be there, calm and unconcerned as ever, thousands and thousands of years after I am dead."

Judith Anderson, who made her big success in "Strange Interlude," was one of Jeanne's last guests at this house. She remembers Jeanne sitting on the driveway wall, dressed in white, with a blue band around her fine blonde hair, looking like a girl of seventeen.

The guests were running around in bathing suits. They had been swimming in the river, and were now playing with Jeanne's toys. Jeanne sat quietly, watching, smiling.

"That's a wonderful diamond," Judith said, looking at the ring Jeanne had worn for years.

"It's only a chip," said Jeanne. "Tomorrow I'll get a real one."

She laughed and turned to Judith seriously.

"I can say these things to you, and you will understand. If I said them to other people they would believe me."

Jeanne had met Judith in Chicago, when Judith was

playing in "The Dove" with Holbrook Blinn. They were of such different types that they became friends at once. One was nervous, frothy, tender and gay, the other quiet, poised and sedate. Judith was a restful person for Jeanne; and Jeanne realized it and clung to her.

She went to see Judith in Quincy, where "Strange Interlude" found refuge when Boston banned it.

"I'll come up again soon," she said as she left, "and we'll go away some place in the country, and pick flowers and red and gold leaves, and talk, and not drink anything at all, just you and I, Judith."

Jeanne felt she could confide in Judith, and, riding into town with her after the last week-end, she told her something of her life, her loneliness, her constant illness. She talked of God, and religion, and her need to regain her old faith. At times she pressed Judith's hand, squeezed it hard.

Her talk rambled. She spoke of a play she was going to write, and became almost incoherent. But as the car left Yonkers, and entered the traffic of New York, she brightened, became gay and understandable.

"I must have a salon," she cried, "a salon where I can have open house, but not too open. Say on Sunday afternoons, and perhaps one night a week. I'll have artists, writers, musicians, singers, dancers, people of the stage, everybody—well of course not everybody, only the people I like and revere. I must do that—if I live."

II

Jeanne's movie contract, arranged by Sam Harris and Monta Bell, called for three pictures, "The Letter," "Jealousy," and "The Laughing Lady." Jeanne was to receive $200,000.

She made the first two pictures, but Ruth Chatterton was called in to take her place in "The Laughing Lady." Jeanne could not possibly have finished it. She was content to have the studio officials buy up her contract.

If her reputation had grown with the years, her infirmities had kept pace with it. The throat infection had not been cured. Her chest was weaker than it had ever been—and the dread of consumption had grown strong. She had developed neuralgia, and a kidney disease. Her broken jaw pained her almost constantly, though the drugs dulled it somewhat. Her sinus trouble had returned, and her eyes needed the attention of a surgeon.

"My body looks like a war map from all the scars the doctors have made on it," she said. "Now I must have an operation on my eyes."

But she gave that tired worn-out body no rest. More and more drugs were needed to make it do the work her will demanded, more sedatives to make it sleep, more stimulants to drive it to work.

At times her mind was troubled, and her memory distorted. She fully believed that Fay Bainter, while

a guest at her home in Briar Cliff Hills, had dug up her finest trees and transplanted them.

"She got out of bed in the middle of the night," Jeanne said. "She came out in her nighty and dug them up and planted them again. I know she did."

With equal force she claimed that Reggie Vanderbilt had tried to burn down her home.

Yet she looked beautiful and well. She danced all over the Paramount studios, she laughed, she sang, she played Puck-like jokes. Only the few who knew her well, realized she was sick.

"The Letter" was the first big dramatic smash of the new "talkies," and though it wasn't a great box office success, it was one of the finest pictures ever made. After Jeanne's death it was shown in the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios in Culver City—and all the actors and actresses were compelled to see it, that they might observe a really great actress in a really great play.

They watched Jeanne on the witness stand, fighting for her life. They saw no tearing of handkerchiefs, no biting of the lips, no writhing hands, no pathetic looks at the jurors, only a slight gesture now and then to show her nervousness. They were amazed. Jeanne's attitude, Jeanne's voice, made them almost ready to believe she was telling the truth, though they had seen her kill her lover in a fit of jealousy, and not in a fight to save her virtue.

Yet when "The Letter" was finished in the Paramount studio, the assistant directors, the stage hands,

the actors and actresses who had worked with Jeanne, all gave vent to their happiness—until they learned that they had two more pictures to make with her.

Jeanne Eagels was temperamental, they said, ritzy, cruel, and pathetically dumb. She couldn't remember the lines she was to say; and when they were repeated to her, she would say they were stupid. She insisted on doing things, not as the assistant director, or the director thought they should be done, but as she believed. And she would wait until Monta Bell came on the scene to settle all arguments. Strangely enough the shrewd Monta Bell usually sided with Jeanne—which did not make her popular.

She paid no attention to schedules, though she arrived on time every morning. Bell would make an appointment for her to see the dressmaker at 10 o'clock in the morning, and fix an hour in the afternoon for the selection of shoes. The other members of the cast would be instructed to appear at 11 o'clock. Everything would be so arranged that the picture might be shot between that hour and the time set for Jeanne to visit the shoe stores. Jeanne would approve.

And the next day she would appear at noon, with a dozen pairs of shoes, to explain that she had spent the morning shopping. The unit would be disorganized for several days.

Jeanne didn't care what they said about her. As a matter of fact she wanted them to think her temperamental and savage, and all but impossible to handle.

It gave her a chance to have her own way about things —and she felt that having her own way was vital to the picture. If she let all these "stupid people" tell her what to do the picture would be terrible.

She had various ways of letting everybody know she was in a "vicious mood" and not to be trifled with. She would slip a bill into the pocket of the hall porter as she entered the studio, and then—first winking at him to show it was all fun and good nature—she would scream insults at him until men came running out of offices to see who was being murdered.

She seldom missed an opportunity to further her own ends thus. Even the boy who brought her meals to her room was a more or less unwilling accomplice.

"Where's my butter?" Jeanne shouted at him.

"Butter? There's butter right here, Miss Eagels!"

"That little piece? I know what you've done, you rascal. You've stolen my butter and given it to Gertie Lawrence. Haven't you? You're in love with her! I know. And you gave her my butter. You go right back this instant and take it away from her."

Gertrude Lawrence was in another unit in the same studio; and the boy's confused statements to her that Jeanne thought she was stealing butter didn't make for peace and amity. A worried director went out and bought a pound of butter and gave it to the boy.

"For God's sake hurry to her with this," he said. "Give her anything to calm her down. Tell her I'll buy her a tub of butter if she wants it."

The boy arrived to find Jeanne rolling on the floor and laughing. He threw down the butter and fled.

Jeanne's secretary, 'Stina Larson, and a maid, usually accompanied Jeanne to the studio, and 'Stina was always near by holding a lizard skin powder box tenderly in her hands while Jeanne was playing. Frequently Jeanne would call her, sometimes interrupting a scene, and bid her, " Powder my nose."

Directors, actors, extras, electricians, camera men, and others would stand around, cursing inwardly, and waiting until 'Stina had performed this rite for her mistress. 'Stina always applied the powder with deliberation, and reverence. It must be done just so. It must not be done hurriedly. There was too much at stake.

'Stina was impressed—and bewildered—with this world of make-believe.

She was so overcome on her first visit that she could hardly talk—the orchestras playing everywhere, the beautiful stages and the men and women on them, singing and playing, the miles and miles of rubber-covered wires—they looked like hoses—the lights, the cameras, the people walking around, soldiers, generals weighted down with medals, beautiful women in clothes of another day, gypsies, gangsters, policemen, sailors, everybody painted, everybody silent and glum.

It was only in the studio café at luncheon that 'Stina found her voice. She had been looking at a couple of nuns who had just entered; and was thinking " what

a contrast to all these make-believe people," when one of them saw an acquaintance across the room and cried, "Hello, Billy. How the hell are you?"

'Stina gasped and turned to Jeanne.

"Aren't they real, either?" she asked.

III

Jeanne took a long time to make "The Letter," but she thought she would never finish "Jealousy." When she did finish it she had to do it all over again, because of Tony Bushell.

They had to write her lines on a blackboard now, that she might read them as she played. Sometimes she couldn't read them. Sometimes she refused to read them, and spoke whatever lines came into her head. And when the director stopped the camera and the sound-recording machine and asked her why, she would turn angrily on some luckless actor standing near, and blame him for making a noise.

Blanche LeClair, a young blonde actress, was the only other woman of any importance in the cast, though Jeanne did get a part for Nellie Savage, Mama Froggy's daughter. Nellie, grown up into a distinguished tall girl who might easily be mistaken for a Russian Princess, was one of the manikins. She exhibited a gown for which Jeanne had paid $1,000. It weighed forty pounds. It was an evening gown covered with brilliants.

Jeanne didn't like Miss LeClair, especially when she chanced on the set one day to see her making a bathtub scene. Blanche was nude, and in her tub when the villain entered.

Jeanne watched without comment, but the next day she appeared before the camera in a green georgette dress. Mort Blumenstock, then an assistant director, turned his eyes in another direction. But others hurried up. The gown revealed, rather than concealed; and there was nothing beneath the gown but Jeanne.

"You can't wear that," someone protested. "It's—it's nothing. I mean it's—it's impossible."

Jeanne tossed her head.

"I'm the star of this picture," she said. "The people want to see me, not Blanche LeClair. If you can show her in a bathtub, you must show me in this georgette."

The bathtub scene was cut out. And Jeanne went to her dressing room and put on some clothes.

Jeanne tried hard, terribly hard. And she made it harder for herself by never giving in, by fighting everyone, by insisting on her own way. It seemed impossible for her to remember her lines, impossible for her to simulate any of the emotions needed for the picture, except despair. She was often the very picture of despair.

She drank in her dressing room now; and at a time when she was supposed to be working. They missed her once, and searched all over the studio. They could

not find her. She had not gone to her apartment in New York. She had not gone to Ossining. She had simply vanished.

They found her in her dressing room—though she hadn't been there five minutes before, and nobody had seen her going in—and she was weeping.

"Nobody loves me!" she cried. "Nobody cares about me. Nobody cares if I live or die. And I hate everybody as they hate me."

She took a sip from the bottle she had in her hand.

"I'm the greatest actress in the world," she went on, "and the greatest failure. And nobody gives a damn."

Jeanne was proud of her work in "The Letter," and of the advertising it was given. She took her mother for a ride up Broadway, that she might see the sign—the biggest sign on Broadway—with Jeanne's name blazoned across it for millions of people to read.

"I owe that to Equity," she said, with a giggle. "I hope Frank Gilmore sees it."

She went to the opening night of "The Letter" with Barry O'Neill, but she could not stay in her seat. She must go out into the lobby every so often, walking slowly up the aisle and listening to everything people might be saying about her. She came again the following night, muffled up so that no one would recognize her, and she came three or four times later to look at herself and hear people say "Isn't she lovely?" "Isn't she wonderful?" "Wouldn't you give everything you have to be like her?"

She loved herself in "The Letter," but she hated "Jealousy" because so many of her best scenes had been cut out of it.

"I'm going to write Jesse Lasky a letter," she said to Outhwaite. "I'm going to tell him about the cuts. I'm going to say 'Dear Mr. Lasky—After seeing "Jealousy" I suggest that you change your motto from "Bigger and Better Pictures" to "Bigger and Better Scissors."'"

"You're crazy," said the outspoken Outhwaite. "You can't insult your boss like that. He'll throw you out on your ear."

"I hope he does," she said. "I hate the movies. They're stupid. They're inane. I want to go back to the stage. Just a little while now and Sam Harris will have a hit for me."

"The Laughing Lady" Jeanne called the height of stupidity.

"They take a beautiful English play," she wailed, "and vulgarize it. Not only do they use American players, but they stick a life-saver into the cast of characters, and some tabloid newspaper reporters. It makes me sick to think of it."

Jeanne ridiculed and damned the idea of using a life-saver in the picture, but finally submitted to the judgment of her friend, Monta Bell. She would do anything he told her to do. She began to look through a pile of pictures of men in bathing suits.

"Disgusting," she said of one. "Horrible," of an-

other. "Look at those bony knees! Aren't men hell in bathing suits?"

One by one she discarded the pictures, until she came to that of Johnny Weismuller, the champion swimmer. She gave a little gasp of pleasure.

"Ooooh! I want him!" she cried.

Bell sent for Weismuller and tried him out. But his voice, like that of most athletes, was high pitched and not suited for sound pictures. They let him go despite Jeanne's protests.

Jeanne accepted another actor, and began to read the script. This must be changed, and that, she said.

"Who's the scenario writer?" she asked Bell.

"Bartlett Cormack."

"I'd like to meet him and tell him about these changes."

Bell sounded a buzzer and presently Cormack was being introduced.

Jeanne gave him one of her nicest smiles, suggested that he change the script as she wanted, and asked him what he thought of her ideas.

"Good," said Cormack. "They will really strengthen the story."

She gave him a hand in farewell, and Cormack sat up all night rewriting the scenes she didn't like. He strolled into Bell's office the next day with the completed manuscript to find Jeanne there.

"Here he is now," said Bell. "We were just talking about you, Cormack."

"Yes," said Jeanne. "You are the scenario writer?"

She looked at him as though she had never seen him before.

"What is your name?"

"Cormack. Bartlett Cormack."

"Cormack. So nice to meet you. I have read your script, but I want some changes made."

She outlined the scenes, exactly as she had on the preceding day.

"Yes, I know," said Cormack. "I sat up all night doing them exactly as you suggested."

"What do you mean?" cried Jeanne, outraged. "I meet you for the first time in my life and ask you to do something—and you try to say you have already done it. I ask you, what do you mean?"

"Why," said Cormack, "I met you yesterday and you ——"

Jeanne turned to Bell.

"Is the man crazy?" she asked. "I never saw him before. I was not here yesterday. I told him nothing. And he says—you heard what he says. Is he trying to insult my intelligence?"

"Cormack's all right," Bell said, smiling a little at Jeanne. "He says he's going to sit up all night to fix those scenes for you."

"Oh," said Jeanne. "That's different. I'm sorry I didn't understand. Good-bye."

Another day Jeanne came in and asked to be released from her contract.

"I'm sick, Monta," she said. "I'm very sick. My eyes are bad. It will take two weeks for the operation. And it may not succeed. Besides, I don't like this picture, the way it's cheapened and gagged. Can't we come to some agreement? I want to quit the movies forever. I want to go back to the stage—when I'm well."

"I'll take it up with the legal department, Jeanne. I think we can arrange it."

She gave him a quick little kiss, and vanished forever from the movie studios.

IV

The operation was performed successfully, and after two weeks spent recuperating, Jeanne took up her life where she had left it. 'Stina had started to write the story of that life, and Jeanne was helping her.

"Maybe I'll write the story myself some day," she said. "If I do, it will be fearless, sensational, and true—and it will make a million dollars for my mother. I was thinking of that the other day as I lay in bed, looking out at the mountains. Go ahead, 'Stina, write down our daily routine, and some day—if I live—we'll go over it together and make it into a book."

People called at her apartment, or her new house in Ossining, and she mixed them drinks, but did not drink with them. Sam Harris and other producers sent her their best plays to read. She was interested in "An

Affair of State," in which her old press agent and friend, George Holland, had a financial interest. And she liked "Diana," a drama made from the life story of Isadora Duncan.

She went with the Webbs to see "Madame X," and talked of Willard Mack who wrote the movie version.

She quarreled with Barry O'Neill. She quarreled with Outhwaite. She tried to arrange the party to see Beatrice Lillie at the Palace and play a little joke on her. But Clifton wouldn't come, and she felt bad about it.

She woke on a Monday morning in Ossining, bored with reading plays, lonesome, desperate. She wanted to drink, and there was nothing in the house. She called her chauffeur, visited an Ossining speakeasy, filled the car with liquor, and was driven to her apartment in Park Avenue, New York.

"I won't need you the rest of the day," she told the chauffeur. "I'll call you when I want you again."

She locked herself in her apartment, and though her friends, and her secretary and her maid rang the bell repeatedly, she would not open the door. They called her on the telephone. She would not answer.

On Thursday morning 'Stina was let into the apartment. She found Jeanne sober, lovely, radiant. They breakfasted together, Jeanne taking nothing but hot water and a bit of toast. They examined the wardrobe, and Jeanne ran her hands lovingly over the new ermine she had bought, and which she was never to wear. She

Underwood & Underwood

Jeanne Eagels and Barry O'Neill

talked of gowns she wanted for the opening of a swagger night club.

"Will you take some books and pictures to Ossining for me?" she asked. She knew exactly where she would place those books, and where she wanted to hang the pictures.

"I'll take them and be right back," 'Stina said. "The chauffeur's downstairs with the car."

"Have him come up. He can carry the pictures. It's cold—and maybe he'd like some hot coffee."

The chauffeur had no overcoat. Jeanne noticed that at once. He said he had none to wear.

"'Stina, write him an order on Brill Brothers for an overcoat—any coat in the store that he wants."

'Stina wrote the order, and Jeanne signed it. It was the last time she wrote her name.

As 'Stina started for Ossining the phone rang. It was Barry O'Neill calling. Jeanne's voice was happy. 'Stina closed the door, and left. When she got to Ossining she wanted to return immediately. She was nervous, impatient.

"Better have some tea," said the cook. "It will warm you."

'Stina consented, reluctantly. When she had drained the cup she looked at the leaves in the bottom.

"I can read tea leaves," said the cook, taking the cup from her and peering into it. "But this—this is funny. All I see is a box."

"A coffin, you mean!" cried 'Stina. She put on

hat and coat and hurried to the car. The chauffeur sped back to New York. The speedometer read 55.

"Faster," 'Stina said.

"What's the matter?" the chauffeur asked. "Going to a funeral?"

'Stina made no reply.

They arrived at the apartment as Jeanne was leaving. Jeanne was accompanied by a nurse.

"I'm going to Dr. Caldwell's," Jeanne said, "for one of my regular treatments."

"I'm going with you," 'Stina decided, and hurried downstairs. The car was at the curb, but the chauffeur was in a phone booth in the corner drug store. 'Stina interrupted his conversation.

"Who you talking to?"

"My wife. Why?"

"Break off. You've got to take Miss Eagels to the hospital."

The chauffeur, alarmed, hung up in the middle of a sentence, and got behind the wheel.

They arrived at the hospital in a few minutes, and spent some time chatting with the nurse, awaiting the coming of the doctor. Jeanne was in a blue frock. On her neck was an imitation pearl necklace with a genuine diamond clasp. On her fingers were four rings, a square diamond in a platinum setting, a large genuine pearl ring, a diamond-studded wedding band, and a plain guard ring. Ted Coy wept when he learned that

Jeanne had died, but it softened his grief a little to know she died wearing the wedding band and the pearl he had given her.

Another nurse appeared.

"The doctor is ready for you, Miss Eagels."

Jeanne stood up. 'Stina was talking to one of the nurses. Jeanne started up the stairs. She hesitated, turned, and gave 'Stina her compact and lipstick to hold. A little squeeze of 'Stina's hand, a smile, and Jeanne was gone.

'Stina continued her conversation with the nurse for a few minutes, then went upstairs to be with Jeanne. She found her in a little room near the head of the stairs. She was lying on a couch, gasping for breath.

And even as 'Stina watched, stricken dumb, Jeanne ceased to gasp. Her arms fell of their own weight to her side.

Jeanne Eagels, "greatest actress in the world," was dead.

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